This time US ambassador lauds RP justice system

Story below, Col. I

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Marcos grandson in Boracay bar brawl

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, *in Manila* **and Ma. Diosa Labiste**
PDI Visayas Bureau

THE LATE dictator Ferdinand Marcos' eldest child yesterday publicly apologized for a New Year bar brawl in which her son was involved.

In a statement, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee

MARCOS/ A4

WHAT'S INSIDE

- RP veterans' bill refiled in the US Senate
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- PNP: Cardeño still in RP
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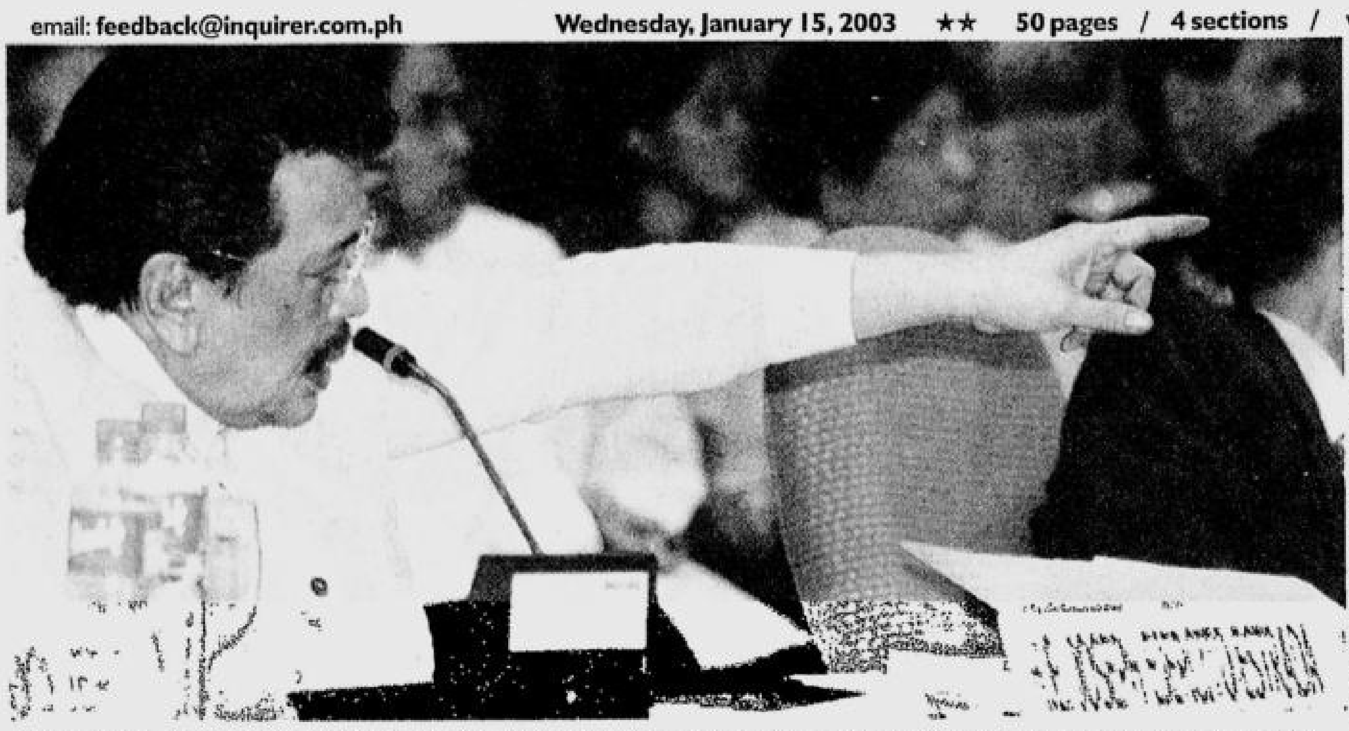
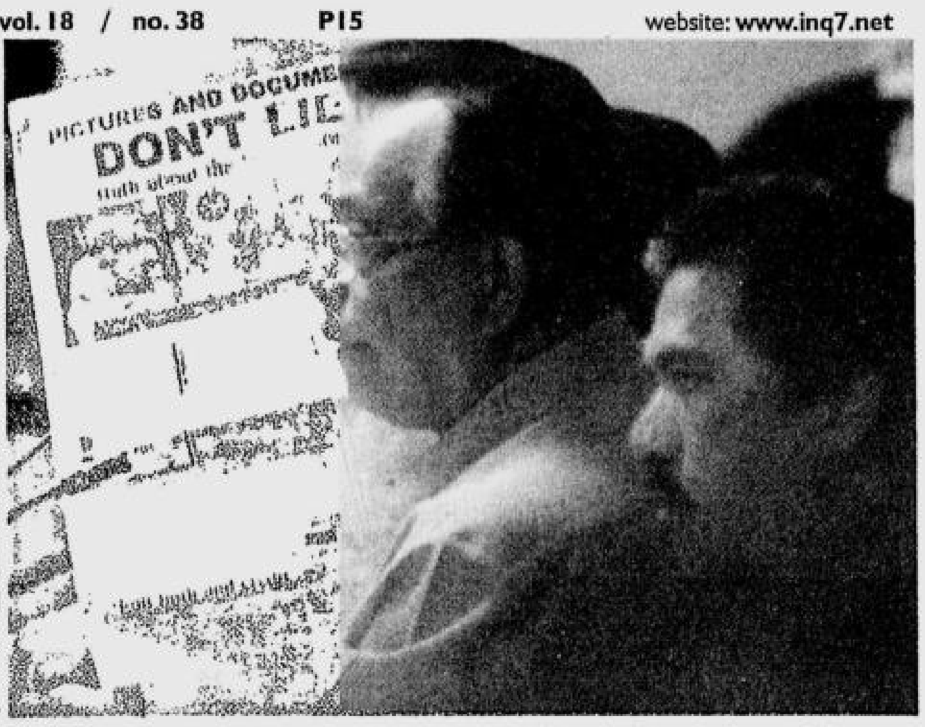


I ACCUSE the Macapagal administration of "selective justice," ex-President Estrada said among many other critiques at the Senate hearing on the endlessly controversial and muddled Impsa contract. DENNIS SABANGAN



SENATORS Aquilino Pimentel and Vicente Sotto III probe Estrada about a full-page advertisement in the INQUIRER. JESS YUSON

GMA bashed in Erap show

Sympathetic senators hear ex-President's gripes

By Rocky Nazareno

IN HIS once-postponed, much-anticipated testimony before the Senate, deposed President Joseph Estrada charged that the Macapagal administration had granted the Argentine firm Impsa a direct government guarantee.

Estrada showed he had not lost his political skills when he deftly turned the committee hearing into a forum for bashing his successor President Macapagal-Arroyo, accusing the Ramos and Macapagal administrations of burdening the people with higher purchased power adjustments, airing his grievances about the justice system, and even discussing his state of health.

He also used the occasion--an investigation into the Impsa contract--to ask why the Macapagal administration did not open the controversial Coutts Bank account allegedly used to transfer bribe money to ex-Justice Sec. Hernando Perez, or the books of the Lualhati Foundation, which received at least P8 million from Jimenez. He assailed what he called "selective justice," noting that the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation was probed and the second Jose Velarde envelope opened.

But his accusations were overshadowed by his statement that the $14-million "offer" from his friend Mark Jimenez in 1999 to speed up the approval of the controversial Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) power project was not a bribe. It was something in the nature of a donation, he said.

In a Nov. 21, 2002 interview with the INQUIRER, Estrada was explicit about

GMA BASHED/ A18

'Eraptions' at Senate: 'Subpoena me every day'

By Rocky Nazareno and Volt Contreras

IF ONLY the Senate could summon him everyday.

Deposed President Joseph Estrada, obviously grateful for the break from his detention at the Veterans Memorial Medical Center, said he hoped the Senate would "subpoena me everyday."

"Some more (subpoenas)," Estrada exclaimed, as he acknowledged the senators who thanked him after he testified before the Senate committee on government corporations and public enterprises.

The Senate hearing started at around 9:45 a.m. and formally ended at around 12:15 p.m. By 2 p.m, Estrada and his security convoy had left the Senate to return to the VMMC, via the same Edsa route they took going to the hearing.

After his testimony, Estrada tried to savor every minute of his temporary liberty at the Senate by receiving friends and supporters at the office of his wife, Sen. Luisa "Loi" Ejercito, where he had lunch.

"It feels good seeing my colleagues

ERAPTIONS/ A18

Malacañang downplays Senate quiz

By Dona Pazzibugan

THE PALACE yesterday tried to project an attitude of studied indifference to deposed President Joseph Estrada's testimony at the Senate.

"The President said she will not be distracted by this circus. She will just concentrate on just what needs to be done," presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said in a briefing.

"As a matter of fact, while the circus was going on, she was presiding over a Ledac (Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council) meeting," he added.

MALACAÑANG/ A18

China opens door to RP teachers, maids

By Blanche S. Rivera

NOT just domestic helpers but Filipino teachers will be deployed to China soon if the government can work out an acceptable compensation package for the teachers, the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) said yesterday.

There are job orders for teachers in English but the government has yet to approve the deployment pending an agreement on compensation, according

CHINA/ A18

WHERE were the defenders of the faith? And with opposition leader Senator Angara, too (3rd from left)? They were at the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council meeting convened by the President. EDWIN BACASMAS

Angara opts to attend Palace meeting

By Dona Pazzibugan

WHILE his party mates yesterday heard deposed President Joseph Estrada's testimony in the Senate on a controversial power deal, opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara was in Malacañang attending the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) meeting.

Angara, who chairs the biggest opposition party Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), was invited to the meeting although he is not a member of Ledac. He was Estrada's executive secretary and believed to be one of his staunchest allies.

The meeting, presided over by President Macapagal-Arroyo, was attended by six administration senators, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., 10 Cabinet officials and 15 members of the House of Representatives.

Ms Macapagal called the meeting to ask Congress to fast-track the passage of several bills, mostly dealing with the economy.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Ms Macapagal did not intentionally schedule the meeting to coincide with Estrada's Senate appearance.

"We will not be distracted by any of

ANGARA/ A17

Orchids on birth control pills bloom

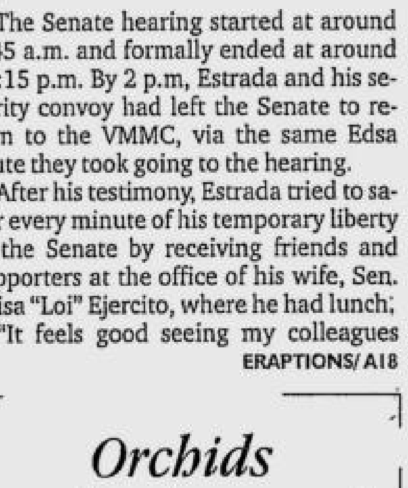
By Armand N. Nocum

THE PHILIPPINES' population program appears to be going, not to the dogs, but to the orchids.

By Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit's own admission, medical personnel in municipal and provincial health centers have been dealing with the oversupply of contraceptive pills by using these to fertilize the exotic plants.

The pills, along with condoms

ORCHIDS/ A4



GUSTO NAMIN NATURAL METHOD DIN!

MARK JIMENEZ EXTRADITION CITED

US ambassador praises RP justice system

By Norman Bordadora

SIX months after denouncing corruption in the Philippine judiciary, US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone is now all praises for vital judicial reforms instituted by Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

The outspoken US envoy yesterday cited in particular the Supreme Court decision rejecting with finality Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez's right to bail in connection with the US request for his extradition to the United States.

In his speech before the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines' the other day, Ricciardone also said the Supreme Court had taken steps to curb the rampant abuse of temporary restraining orders.

Investors have complained that some judges have been "selling" TROs, causing undue delays to various infrastructure projects.

Ricciardone also lauded the Supreme Court's decision to encourage mediation over protracted and costly litigation.

The high court decision last Dec. 17

US AMBASSADOR/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The Eastern section of the country will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/15/03

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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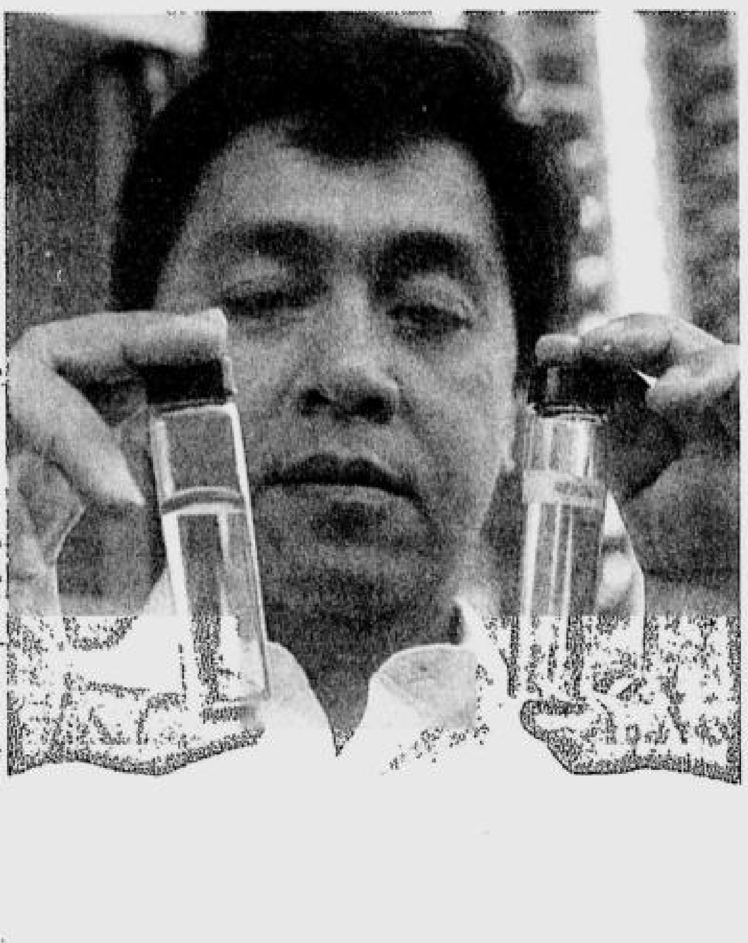
Second FRONT PAGE



CLEAN GAS FOR CLEAN AIR

Energy Secretary Vince Perez tests unleaded gasoline and diesel at a Petron station on Shaw Boulevard in Mandaluyong to check if they comply with the Clean Air Act, which took effect at the start of the year. JM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Cha-cha fate known today at House caucus

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

DOES Charter change have the support of at least two-thirds of the House of Representatives?

This will be answered today during a caucus of all 219 members.

Western Samar Rep. Eduardo Nachura was all set yesterday to deliver his sponsorship speech for a resolution asking the Senate and the House to convene as a constituent assembly to amend the 1987 Charter and change the current form of government.

But formal opening of deliberations was scuttled when Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II insisted on holding the caucus first.

"If we are to take this up on the floor, it should be a collective decision," said Gonzales, chair of the House rules committee which decides what measures are to be taken up every day.

"We have to learn from the past when an initial groundswell of support only fizzled out (in the end)," Gonzales explained. He wasn't looking at a headcount, he said, but the "feel" of "more than majority support."

Nachura maintained that the House should decide on the resolution without minding the position of Senate leaders.

The Senate has opposed moves initiated by the House, and has instead proposed the election of delegates to a Constitutional Convention simultaneous with the 2004 polls.

A House decision would be an "exercise in futility," Gonzales said, "if at the end of the day, the Senate would not agree. "We don't want to be left holding the bag, or look as though we are the ones desperate for cha-cha."

Nachura was sure of "eight or nine" supportive senators at the moment. "Who knows," he said, "in the next weeks, we may get 12."

If a constitutional convention is eventually decided on, he added, "so be it. But based on our consultations, the people feel an urgent need for change."

Palace frowns

Malacañang disagrees. The latest word from the Palace is that Charter change is dead, at least for now.

Presidential Spokesperson Ignacio Bunye yesterday said its proponents might have to wait until after the elections to revive their pet project.

"The President has made known her stand," Bunye said in a press briefing. "She doesn't want a Charter change (to interfere with) the elections. It appears that the Speaker's projection will not happen (soon)."

He was referring to Speaker Jose de Venecia's projection that the shift to a parliamentary form of government was certain before May 2004.

A participant in yesterday's meeting of the Legislative and Executive Development Advisory Council in Malacañang tried to raise the Charter change issue but was told off, Bunye related.

Eight senators led by Senate President Franklin Drilon and 16 congressmen led by De Venecia were present at the meeting called by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Cart before the horse

From Dagupan City came yet another view on the subject yesterday.

"Ravenous wolves in sheep's clothing will still be wolves," Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop Oscar Cruz said. "Whatever clothes you put on corrupt government officials, they will remain corrupt."

Cruz heads the Alliance Against Charter Change Offensive, a multi-sectoral organization that opposed planned Constitutional changes during the Estrada administration.

This time around, he said, several government officials had come to his office seeking the group's support for charter change.

"What we need to do," Cruz insisted, "is find people (untainted by) graft and corruption to run the government, by conducting clean elections."

He conceded that there were many good officials and only "a few rotten ones"—which was unfortunate, he said, because the majority was suspected of being corrupt.

"Changing the form of government is like putting the cart before the horse," Cruz said. "First we should have good politicians. Good politicians mean better economic programs. Then we can have whatever form of government the leaders want."*With Carlito Pablo, and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes of PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Lay off RP affairs, US envoy told

By Christine O. Avendaño

A CONGRESSMAN yesterday accused US Ambassador Frank Ricciardone of interfering in the affairs of the Philippines and asked him to stop giving "prescriptions" on how to solve the country's problems.

Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo told Ricciardone to "just stick to his role of ambassador."

Ocampo was reacting to statements Ricciardone made at a Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines forum the other day where he urged the Philippine government to liberalize the airline industry and hasten the privatization of public utilities, instead of complaining about the latest negative travel advisory issued by the US on the Philippines.

"Ricciardone has no right to dictate on the economic and security policies of the Philippine government," Ocampo said in a statement.

He said Ricciardone's call for Manila to adopt an "open skies policy" would only serve to benefit the "ailing US airline industry."

Likewise, he said, Ricciardone's recommendation that the privatization of the National Power Corp. be fast-tracked would only serve to benefit the giant foreign corporations engaged in electricity production.

Ocampo also took issue with the "malicious statements" made by the US ambassador against the New People's Army and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front.

Obet: I have to do a lot of learning

By G. Lacuarta

NEW Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan will have his hands full when he assumes office on Jan. 20, after farmers' groups and the department's own employees identified yesterday issues the incoming official should prioritize.

But Pagdanganan himself admitted in an interview that he had a lot of learning to do in his new post, his appointment to which he described as "sudden."

"I'm still in the process of familiarizing myself with the organization and the program. I will see the bigger picture on Monday," he said.

He said he had yet to draw up plans to handle CARP (Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program) cases, but he would welcome dialogues with non-government organizations to hear their concerns about the land distribution scheme.

The DAR Employees Association, in a letter to Pagdanganan, said it was willing to cooperate with him where the best interests of CARP and the DAR bureaucracy are at stake.

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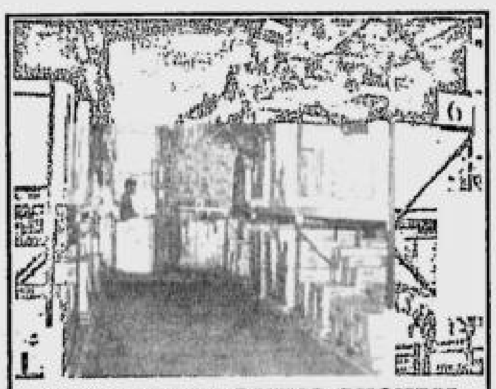

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Sultan of Brunei due for state visit

SULTAN BOLKIAH

BRUNEI'S Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah is expected to make a state visit to the Philippines this month to strengthen bilateral and security cooperation, the foreign office said yesterday.

During his January 27-29 visit, Bolkiah is to sign two agreements on maritime transport and education with Philippine officials as well as meet with President Gloria Arroyo to discuss international security, including the Iraq crisis.

Bolkiah's first state visit here is to reciprocate a trip Arroyo made to the tiny oil-rich Brunei in August, the Department of Foreign Affairs said.

Both countries are members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) which also includes Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *AFP*

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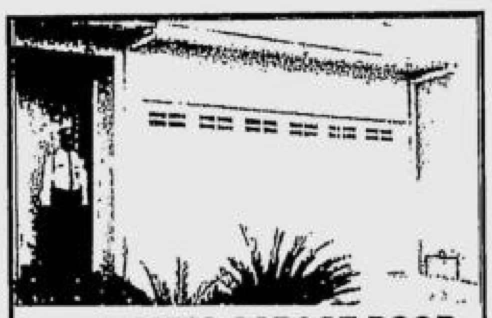

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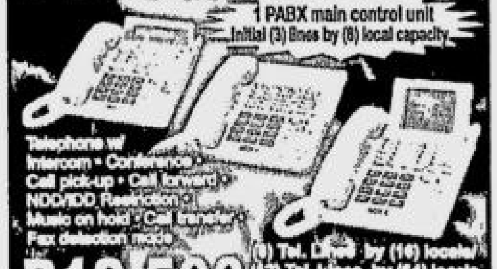

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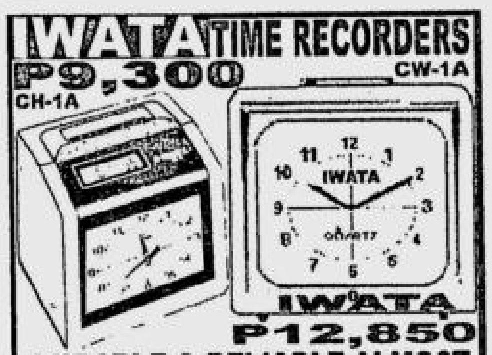

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ASSERTIVENESS TRAINING FOR MGRS. AND SUPERVISORS	January 18, 2003	Saturday	1:00PM-5:00PM
EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER RELATIONS AND HANDLING COMPLAINTS	January 18, 2003	Saturday	1:00PM-5:00PM
HOW TO HANDLE PROBLEM EMPLOYEES	January 18, 2003	Saturday	1:00PM-5:00PM
PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT	January 18, 2003	Saturday	8:30AM-12:30PM
BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE	January 25 – February 8, 2003	Saturday	00PM-5:00PM
COST ESTIMATION FOR BUILDING CONSTRUCTION	January 25 – February 8, 2003	Saturday	1:00PM-5:00PM
EFFECTIVE SECRETARIAL COURSE	January 20 - 31, 2003	M-W-F	6:00PM-8:00PM
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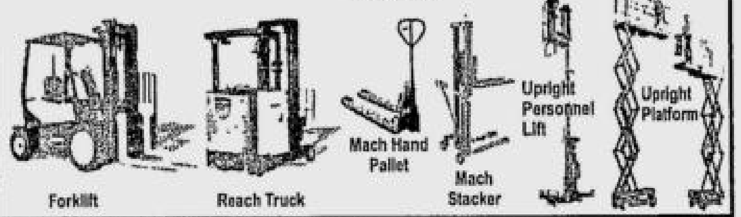

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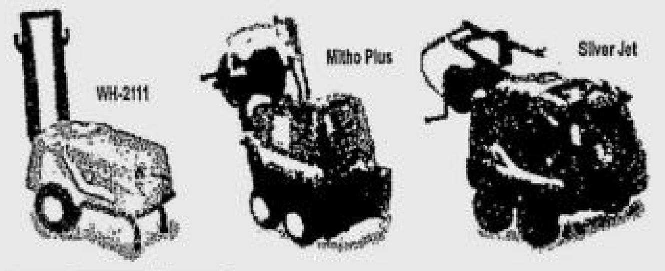

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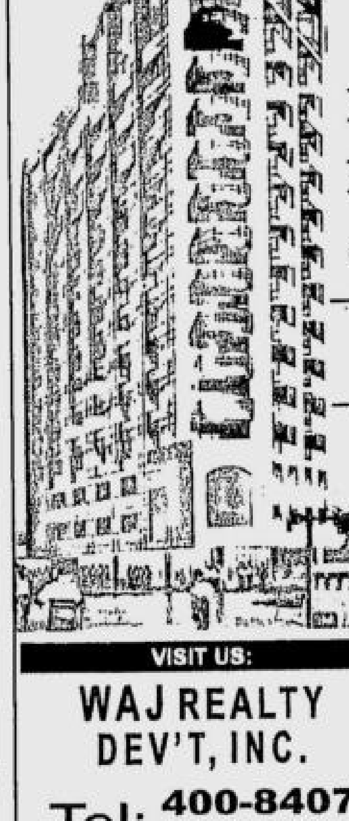

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US envoy lauds RP justice system

From page A1

paved the way for Jimenez's extradition nine days later on charges of tax evasion and illegal campaign contributions to then US President Bill Clinton and other Democrats.

"The Supreme Court acted resolutely to give effect to the solemn (extradition) treaty between the US and the Philippines, confirming that no citizen—no matter how wealthy and no matter his official rank—is above the law," Ricciardone told the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

In a speech before the same forum last July, Ricciardone said that the No. 1 barrier to the inflow of foreign investments was corruption inside and outside the judiciary.

"Investors want to make sure that foreigners and their Filipino partners can have equal access to the courts, to be assured of timely justice, that is not corrupted by people who work outside this system," Ricciardone told Manila-based foreign correspondents then.

His statements drew angry reactions from various quarters, including Davide who asked the US ambassador to identify the corrupt judges.

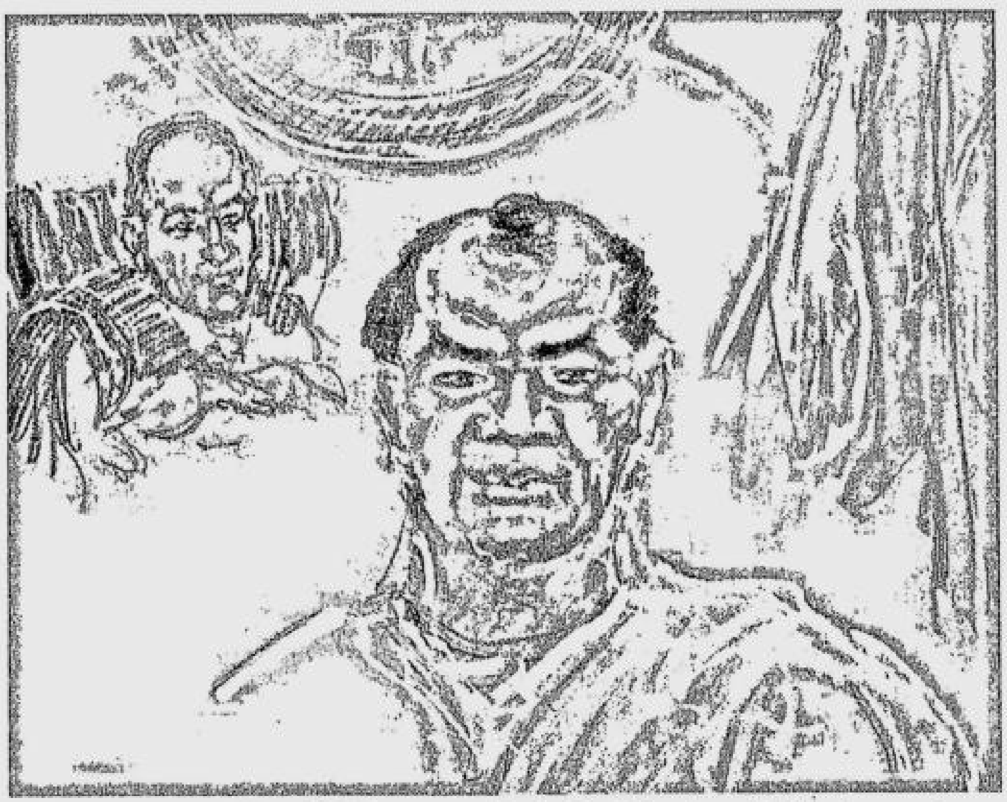
"(Half a year ago), I spoke out in support of the campaign of President Macapagal-Arroyo and Chief Justice Hilario Davide against corruption. In that short time, Chief Justice Davide . . . had realized milestones in the program for judicial reforms," Ricciardone said.

Mark still in jail

While Ricciardone was patting Davide's back in Manila, Jimenez continued to languish in jail in Miami, Florida, while the Manila congressman's attorneys tried to raise $500,000 bail for his release.

Problems in putting up the bond delayed for at least two weeks Jimenez's arraignment on charges of making illegal campaign contributions to Clinton and other Democrats.

"There's been so much difficulty with the bond papers overseas," said attorney Jayne Weintraub, who substituted for Jimenez's lawyers at a brief court hearing on Monday. She had no comment afterward.



THIRD appearance of Rep. Mark Jimenez on Monday in a federal court in Miami as seen by the court artist. AFP

Jimenez, 56, wore a standard jail-issue khaki shirt and pants and brown sandals. The millionaire congressman walked in and out of court with other inmates in hand and leg shackles.

According to a 1999 federal indictment, Jimenez used money from his Miami company and a subsidiary to reimburse employees for illegal donations to Clinton and other politicians.

Jimenez was accused of illegally routing $50,000 to the Democratic National Committee and $33,500 to Democratic campaign committees at the local level from 1994 to 1996.

Interpol update

If the Florida court grants Jimenez bail, an electronic device will be attached to his ankle so US marshals can monitor his movements, according to NBI-Interpol chief and spokesperson Ricardo Diaz.

"He will be allowed to move only in a specific area in Florida," Diaz said.

But Ed Escueta, Jimenez's lawyer, took the NBI to task for "spreading disinformation about the case."

"The case is sub judice and outside of the jurisdiction of the Philippine government and the local justice system," Escueta said in a statement.

"Congressman Jimenez had voluntarily submitted himself to the US jurisdiction, and local officials should refrain from commenting and reporting on a subject they are not legally concerned with," he added.

THUMBS up for the Supreme Court, according to US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone, during the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines luncheon on Tuesday. REUTERS

Escueta said Diaz had no business giving "erroneous updates" on the legal proceedings concerning Jimenez in the United States.

"If local government officials cannot say anything good about Mr. Jimenez, who remains a citizen of the Philippines and a congressman in good standing, then they should refrain from commenting on his trial in the US and respect the constitutional provision that a man is innocent unless proven guilty," he said.

But Diaz said the NBI continued to give updates on the case due to public interest.

"People want to know what happened. Many of them hope he is granted bail. We just can't have a (news) blackout after his extradition," Diaz said. *With reports from Philip Tubeza and AP*

Marcos grandson . . .

From page A1

Marcos described the fight that occurred in Boracay as dumb and silly. She said she was sorry two people got hurt, but said her son, commercial model Fernando Martin Marcos Manotoc, popularly known as "Borgy," had "only a very minor role in the incident."

"I'm deeply sorry that two boys got hurt, especially Mr. Reggie Fong and Ed Lupingco, my son's friend, in a fist fight in Boracay last Jan. 1," she said.

But despite the congresswoman's apology, authorities at the world-famous resort-island were not willing to formally acknowledge that the Marcos grandson was involved in any brawl.

No report of a brawl is on record from the police, the tourism office, or the resort hotel where it supposedly occurred.

PO1 Fe Rebanio of the Boracay Special Protection Unit said they had not received reports of any fight involving Manotoc and his companions during their stay there.

Marcos, however, was categorical. "I hereby apologize to the family of Mr. Fong over what happened," Agence France Presse quoted her as saying over radio station dzBB.

Physician Ray Fong had told the station that his son was treated in hospital for cigarette burns on the back and other injuries after the young man and his friends engaged in a brawl with Manotoc and his friends.

"I was thankful that my son got out of that island alive," Fong said. But he said his family would not press charges against Manotoc.

Fong said he called up the radio station to set the record straight because of earlier reports that Manotoc had merely acted as a peacemaker.

"That's not true," the father said. "He was not breaking up the fight. He was heavily involved in it."

Manotoc is the eldest of Marcos' three sons by sportsman Tommy Manotoc, from whom she is estranged.

'No record'

In her statement, Marcos said she "would just want to note, without insisting that my son is innocent, that Borgy has had no record whatsoever of provoking, [or] being involved in, a boys' fight for almost 20 years now."

She added: "In fact, it is not a secret that Borgy has more girl trouble and [an] overspending-in-shopping problem than getting into a boys' fight.

BORGY MANOTOC: Girl problems, not boys fight, says mom. And does mother know best?

She also said she had "called for all the parents and all the boys involved in the incident to talk and ultimately put an end to this matter."

"I hope that all the boys, regardless of who started it, shall have learned their lessons from this incident," she said.

Marcos did not provide details of the incident.

But according to accounts, the brawl started when Manotoc's group ran into Fong's group at a resort hotel.

Neither group reportedly knew the other, but somehow Lupingco and Fong supposedly got on each other's nerves and a fight ensued at the bar.

The brawl supposedly continued all the way to the beach and ended there.

Marcos is said to have advised her son that he should just run away the next time there was a fight, so that he would not be dragged into it.

In the AFP report, Marcos said she had summoned Manotoc and his friends to explain their behavior, and had written a letter to the mother of one of the young men who she said had reportedly instigated the fight.

"What they did was sheer stupidity," the congresswoman said. "I hope it will not affect their future."

Official silence

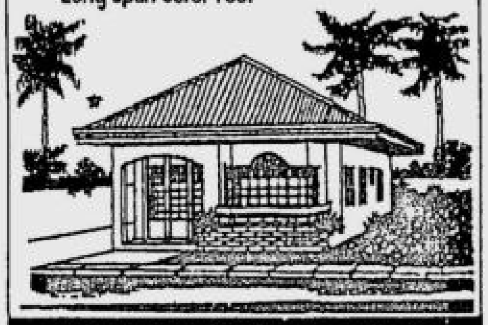
But that future seems safe, if one is to go by the absence of any official record of "what they did."

Judith Icotanim of the Department of Tourism field office in Boracay admitted that she saw Manotoc and his friends before the New Year at the resort hotel Crystal Sand.

She said, however, that she was not aware of any bar brawl reported in Boracay during the holidays.

Crystal Sand manager Olive Quijano maintained that Manotoc's name was not on the guests' logbook. "The reservation might be in somebody else's name," she said.

With an AFP report



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Orchids on birth control . . .

From page A1

and injectable contraceptives, are part of the aid provided by the US Agency for International Development.

"Sometimes, some people use [the pills] to grow orchids," Dayrit told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview yesterday. He made the disclosure in explaining why the Philippine population program would not be greatly affected by the decision of USAid to cut down on its assistance.

According to Dayrit, the problem is not supply but effective distribution to women of child-bearing age.

He lamented that while health centers had a more than sufficient supply of contraceptives, certain local officials did not value the population program enough by releasing travel funds to health personnel.

"When that happens, health personnel do not have the means to go out and distribute the contraceptives. They remain in their offices while the contraceptives pile up," Dayrit said, adding:

"Our supply is so high that in provinces, people running health centers use the pills to grow orchids and the condoms for party balloons."

Dayrit said health personnel had been laboring under the assumption that orchids would flower with the application of contraceptive pills. The pills contain estrogen, which prevents ovulation in women.

But a government physician, who requested anonymity, said she had experimented with using the pills to fertilize her orchids, and found that the trick worked.

Common knowledge

Dayrit said what health personnel had been doing to get rid of the oversupply in contraceptive pills was "common knowledge."

Nothing much has been done about it because local officials are running the health centers, he said.

He promised, however, to install better monitoring procedures in the population program to ensure that contraceptives would reach the people.

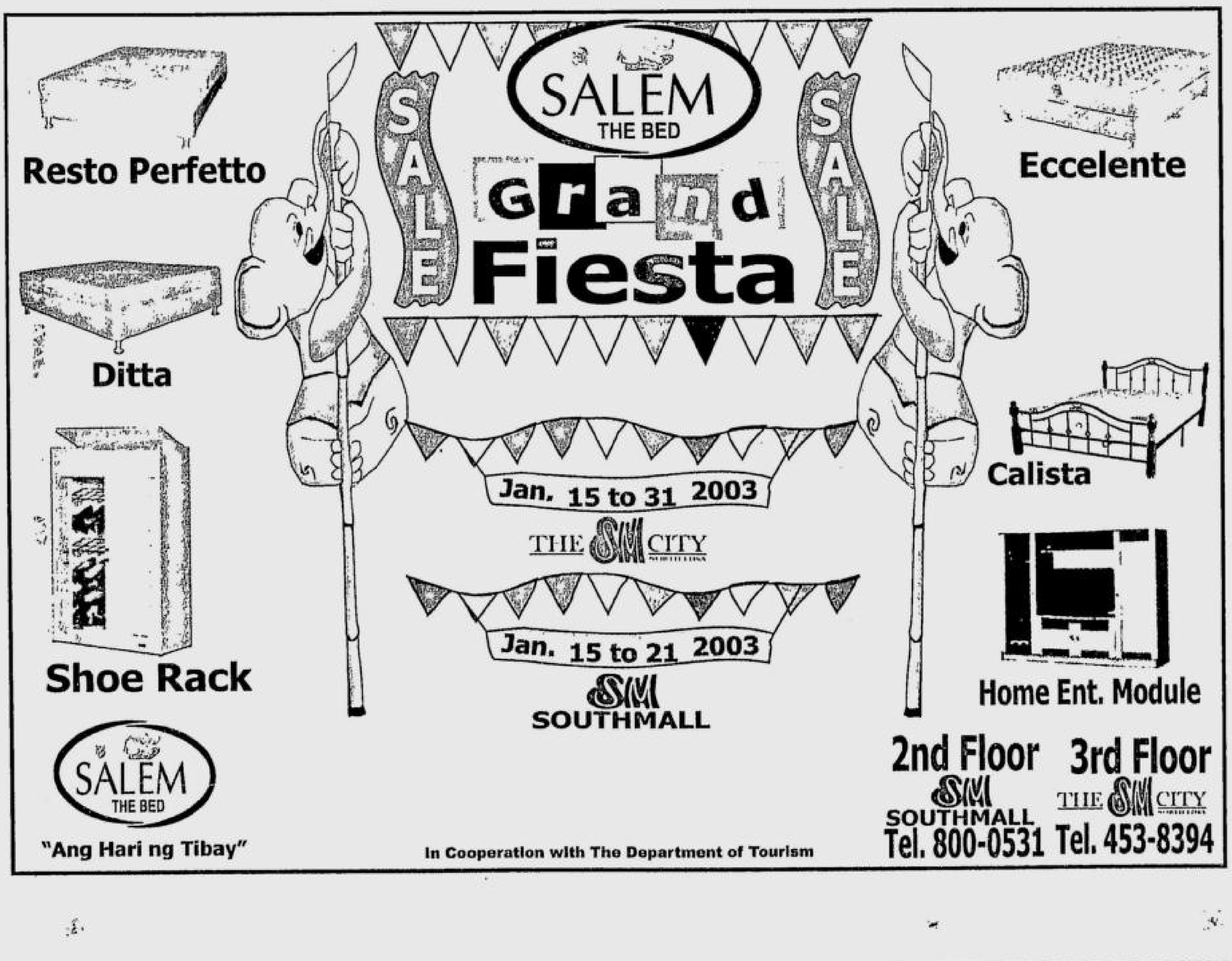
Dayrit clarified that USAid had not completely stopped but merely "trimmed down" on donations.

Its assistance is "now focused" on the sector that needs it most—"people who cannot afford to buy contraceptives," he said.

But even without USAid's help, enough contraceptives are available at health centers nationwide, he added.

From 2001 to the present, USAid has provided the Philippines some P219 million worth of contraceptives.

The Philippines, with a population of 80 million, last year ranked 14th in the list of most populous countries in the world. But the powerful Catholic Church is adamant in its stand that couples should use only "natural" methods in planning their families.



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ATO exec paving way for RP-US air talks

By Abigail L. Ho

AN OFFICIAL of the Philippine air panel has gone to the United States to start exploratory with his counterpart in preparation for air talks between the two countries.

Transportation Undersecretary Arturo Valdez flew to the US Friday for a three-day visit to informally discuss the general parameters of the talks.

"These will be just exploratory talks. By next week, we'll have set schedules for the talks as well as the parameters," he told reporters in an interview.

He disclosed that the country's position had not changed since last year. It would still be lobbying for an all-cargo open skies arrangement instead of an all-out open skies set-up that would also cover passenger traffic.

A source from the Civil Aeronautics Board earlier revealed that the Philippine air panel had been waiting for the US panel's response to a request to hold air talks on the third or fourth week of this month.

But the US panel had still not given its response up to now, and the source admitted that time might not permit talks to be held within January. Air talks with the US usually take more than one round, he said.

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HONDA

Another Impsa drama unfolds at anti-graft hearing

By Carlito Pablo

WHILE deposed President Joseph Estrada testified before the Senate, another drama related to the controversial Impsa power contract unfolded yesterday morning before the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

The PAGC conducted a hearing on the obstruction of justice charges it earlier initiated against resigned Justice Secretary Hernando Perez.

Perez has been battling allegations that he received a $2-million bribe in exchange for a favorable legal opinion from the Department of Justice on the Impsa contract.

He did not attend the hearing but was represented by a battery of lawyers who sought, but failed, to compel PAGC chair Dario Rama to inhibit himself from the case.

The same six lawyers previously questioned PAGC's jurisdiction over Perez, who resigned on Jan. 12. Rama had argued that the PAGC charter allowed the commission to continue deciding cases involving officials no longer in government.

"There was a lively exchange of views," Rama said of the hearing.

The case stemmed from Perez's memorandum to the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation on Nov. 16, 2002, which "strictly prohibited" the release of travel records of top government officials, including himself.

For blocking the public's right to information, the PAGC said, Perez violated three laws and the 1987 Constitution.

Perez issued the memorandum after extradited Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez charged that Perez was in Hong Kong in January 2001, or shortly after he (Jimenez) transferred the $2 million to a Coutts Bank account there.

PHILHEALTH Advisory

No.01-003-2003

For all accredited professional and institutional health care providers

With the strict implementation of PhilHealth Circular No. 34, s-2001, (*Implementation of ICD-10 and Introduction of New Case Type Classification*) which took effect last July 1, 2002, the following ICD-10 systems guidelines shall be implemented starting January 15, 2003 admissions:

- All claims with no codes shall be denied and shall be non-appealable.
- All claims with incorrect codes within the first three (3) characters shall similarly be denied.

This is in line with PhilHealth's adherence to the use of complete and correct coding system to facilitate proper and expeditious processing of claims.

For the complete and accurate lists of these guidelines with coding modifications, visit PhilHealth's website at www.philhealth.gov.ph.

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5 MILF rebels slain in Maguindanao clash

By Jeffrey M. Tupas, Charlie C. Señase and Edwin O. Fernandez
PDI Mindanao Bureau

KIDAPAWAN CITY—At least five Moro Islamic Liberation Front guerrillas were killed in an encounter with government troops in Barangay Old Bunawan, Datu Paglas, Maguindanao, at dawn yesterday, the military reported.

This brings to more than 30 the number of rebel casualties since fighting started Thursday in the towns of Columbio in Sultan Kudarat and Tulunan in Cotabato. Datu Paglas is adjacent to Columbio.

The Agence France Presse, however, quoting southern Philippines military chief Lt. Gen. Narciso Abaya, said only two MILF separatists were killed in the Datu Paglas clash. Abaya said there were no government casualties in the firefight.

Maj. Julieto Ando, 6th Infantry Division spokesperson, said the 39th Infantry Battalion, which forms part of the blocking force of the 602nd Brigade, received a tip from villagers that some retreating MILF fighters would be passing through Barangay Old Bunawan.

The guerrillas were sighted after midnight and a fierce gun battle ensued, Ando said.

The battle was the latest in a series of clashes between the military and the MILF which started after the government forces accused the rebels of harboring members of the Pentagon kidnap-for-ransom group at their camp in Columbio.

While the military had failed to recover the bodies of rebel casualties in the previous encounters, this time they recovered the five bodies. But, Ando said, these were promptly buried by the soldiers in accordance with Muslim custom.

But the MILF has denied it has been involved in clashes with the military.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu said he has not received reports of any encounters between the group and the government. He said the MILF has not lost any members recently.

He said the five men killed in Datu Paglas were "certainly not MILF... maybe some civilians that they (military) salvaged."

Kabalu said the Army has refused to reveal its own casualties. "They suffered four dead in that encounter but they did not report this to media," he said.

Kabalu also accused the military of burning between 50 and 100 houses in Barangay Polomolok in Columbio last Saturday.

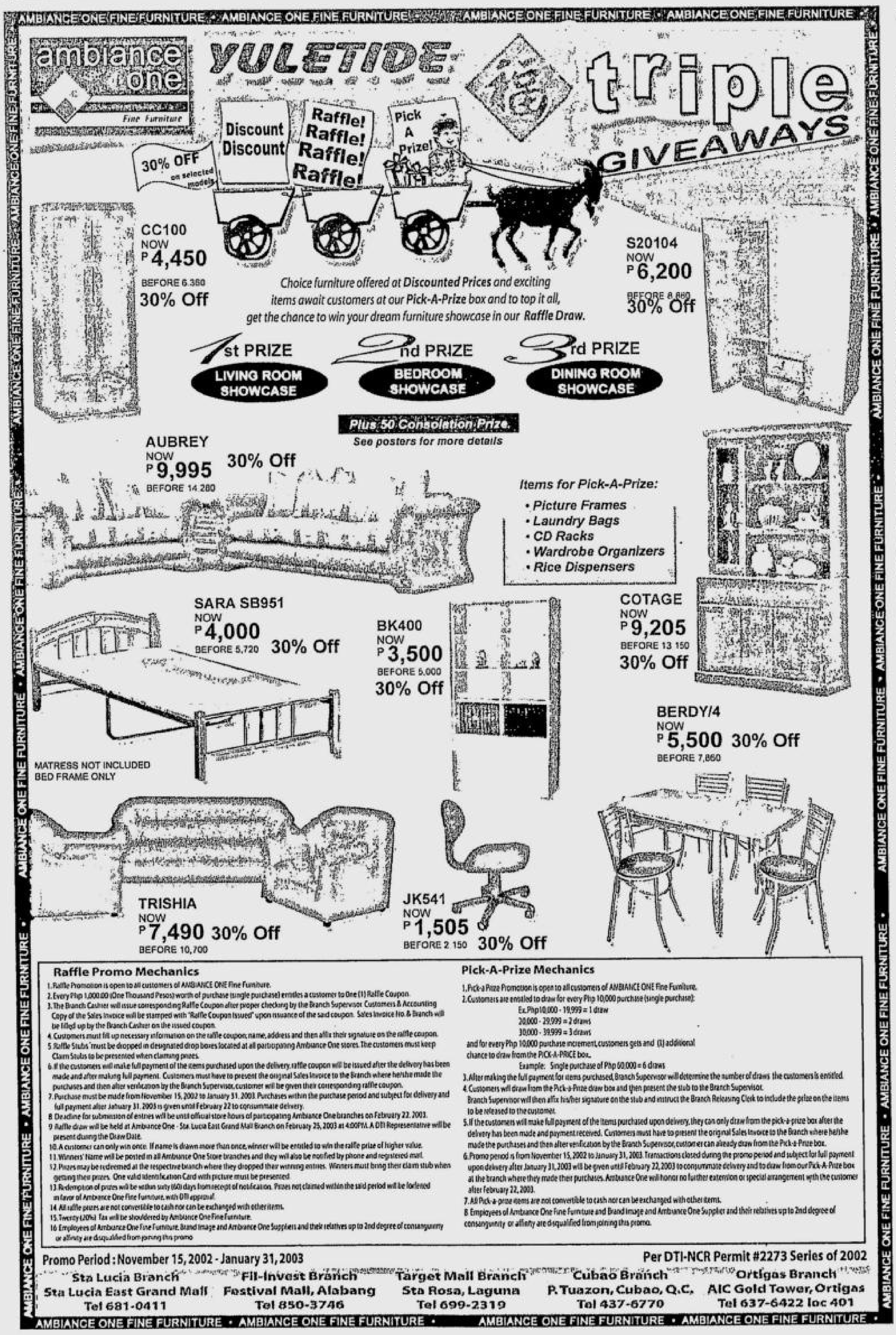
He said the MILF will file before the Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities, which was created by the MILF and government peace panels, arson and other charges for the abuses committed by the military against Polomolok residents suspected of being MILF members.

The military denied Kabalu's charges, saying what was destroyed were rebel bunkhouses and trenches.

Maj. Gen. Generoso Senga, 6th Infantry Division commander, said were it not for the timely "clearing operation" by soldiers, the MILF rebels along with the Pentagon kidnap gang might have established a permanent camp in Polomolok.

At the same time, AFP also reported that two members of the Abu Sayyaf group and a soldier were killed in a firefight near Indanan town on Jolo island Sunday, quoting Sulu provincial military chief Col. Alexander Aleo.

Aleo said Isnilon Hapilon, a senior Abu Sayyaf leader wanted by the US government, was believed wounded in the clash, in which seven soldiers were wounded. *With an AFP report*



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4. Customers must fill up necessary information on the raffle coupon; name, address and then affix their signature on the raffle coupon.
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6. If the customers will make full payment of the items purchased upon the delivery, raffle coupon will be issued after the delivery has been made and after making full payment. Customers must have to present the original Sales Invoice to the Branch where he/she made the purchases and then after verification by the Branch Supervisor, customer will be given their corresponding raffle coupon.
7. Purchase must be made from November 15, 2002 to January 31, 2003. Purchases within the purchase period and subject for delivery and full payment after January 31, 2003 is given until February 22 to consummate delivery.
8. Deadline for submission of entries will be until official store hours of participating Ambiance One branches on February 22, 2003.
9. Raffle draw will be held at Ambiance One - Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall Branch on February 25, 2003 at 4:00PM. A DTI Representative will be present during the Draw Date.
10. A customer can only win once. If name is drawn more than once, winner will be entitled to win the raffle prize of higher value.
11. Winners' Name will be posted in all Ambiance One Store branches and they will also be notified by phone and registered mail.
12. Prizes may be redeemed at the respective branch where they dropped their winning entries. Winners must bring their claim stub when getting their prizes. One valid identification Card with picture must be presented.
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and for every Php 10,000 purchase increment, customers gets and (1) additional chance to draw from the PICK-A-PRICE box.
Example: Single purchase of Php 60,000 = 6 draws
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4. Customers will draw from the Pick-a-Prize draw box and then present the stub to the Branch Supervisor. Branch Supervisor will then affix his/her signature on the stub and instruct the Branch Releasing Clerk to include the prize on the items to be released to the customer.
5. If the customers will make full payment of the items purchased upon delivery, they can only draw from the pick-a-prize box after the delivery has been made and payment received. Customers must have to present the original Sales Invoice to the Branch where he/she made the purchases and then after verification by the Branch Supervisor, customer can already draw from the Pick-a-Prize box.
6. Promo period is from November 15, 2002 to January 31, 2003. Transactions closed during the promo period and subject for full payment upon delivery after January 31, 2003 will be given until February 22, 2003 to consummate delivery and to draw from our Pick-A-Prize box at the branch where they made their purchases. Ambiance One will honor no further extension or special arrangement with the customer after February 22, 2003.
7. All Pick-a-prize items are not convertible to cash nor can be exchanged with other items.
8. Employees of Ambiance One Fine Furniture and Brand Image and Ambiance One Supplier and their relatives up to 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promo.

Promo Period : November 15, 2002 - January 31, 2003

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Tight security for US soldiers

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Stricter security measures will be implemented for American soldiers who will train their Filipino counterparts here in the coming months.

This is mainly because the Unites States government still considers the Abu Sayyaf Group "a threat," according to Col. Douglas R. Lengenfelder, chief of the Joint Special Operation Task Force (JSOTF).

Over the weekend, Lengenfelder told reporters at the newly constructed US facility inside Camp Enrile in Barangay Malagutay, that American and Philippine authorities had agreed on different security approaches within and outside the camp during the field exercises.

Last Oct. 2, an American soldier was killed and another was wounded when a bomb exploded in a videoke bar a few meters away from the camp.

In view of the incident, Lengenfelder explained, "certain rules" had to be changed—for instance, the rules on which visitors the American soldiers could entertain and when, were modified "a little."

It was "no big deal," the JSOTF chief said; it just boiled down to the "great cooperation" between the Philippines and US government military forces.

"That cooperation (applies) in terms of intelligence and actual physical security within the bases themselves, and in the field where we are going to operate," he said.

Meanwhile, National Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes said the $25-million budget for the training did not include "humanitarian projects."

"(The budget) was prepared to cover the five-module area training involving two Light Reaction Companies, four Light Infantry Battalion, night flying and night navigating for pilots in Mactan and Cebu City, training for noncommissioned officers, and intelligence operation fusion," Reyes said.

The exercises will involve a total of 16 companies of Filipino troops.

Training in Sulu would not push through as earlier planned, Reyes revealed, because of the peace and order problem in the area.

Overall, Reyes said, this year's training would be "longer," scheduled to last until December. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

NBI says it's holding witness in Viña slay

By Philip Tubeza

THE WITNESS to the killing of Senior Supt. Teofilo Viña who went into hiding prompting suspicion he was involved in the murder was arrested yesterday.

A ranking National Bureau of Investigation official said police arrested Renato Josue Arenas, but he did not say where. Arenas was the only witness to the shooting death of Viña at a dinner party in Tanza, Cavite on Jan. 7 who did not present himself to investigators.

The NBI official, who requested anonymity, said the arrest came even after several persons had called up the bureau to report that Arenas was dead.

The authorities had wanted to speak to Arenas after it was learned he was a friend of Medar Cruz, the principal suspect whom other witnesses said had pumped between eight and nine bullets into Viña minutes after the latter arrived at the party.

Arenas went into hiding after the incident but over the last weekend he reportedly sent feelers to the police saying he was surfacing in 48 hours.

When he failed to show up, the police decided to consider him a suspect.

Witnesses said Arenas was sitting beside Cruz at the party. He also knew Cruz when both of them lived in the United States.

Meanwhile, Viña's murder has prodded the administration to ask the courts to speed up the cases against the suspects in the abduction and killing of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, in November 2000.

NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco said lawmen want arrest warrants issued as soon as possible against Senior Supts. Michael Ray Aquino and Cesar Mancao in order to begin the process to bring the two back to the country.

Aquino and Mancao, had been tagged as principals in the Dacer case.

PENSION BENEFITS

RP veterans bill refiled in US Senate

By Jennie L. Ilustre

WASHINGTON—Senator Daniel Inouye has reintroduced a bill that would allow qualified veterans of the Philippine Commonwealth Army, recognized guerrillas and New Philippine Scouts to receive medical care and disability pension benefits from the United States Department of Veteran Affairs.

Congressional sources say Rep. Randy "Duke" Cunningham, Republican from California, and Rep. Bob Filner (D, California), both strong veterans' supporters, will probably introduce a sister bill when Congress resumes session Jan. 28 for the State of the Nation Address by President George W. Bush.

"The Filipino Veterans' Benefit Improvements Act," or S. 68, was refiled on Jan. 7, first day of the new 108th Congress. The Democrat from Hawaii filed the bill as S. 1042 last year.

"It's basically the same bill," said Marie C. Blanco, Inouye's legislative assistant who has worked behind the scenes on all veterans' bills.

It was an offshoot of last year's negotiations among the Philippine Government's Joint Executive-Legislative Delegation, the American Coalition for Filipino Veterans (ACFV) and congressional sponsors led by Senator Inouye, former Rep. Benjamin Gilman (R, NY) and Rep. Filner.

If the bill is approved, Philippine-based veterans stand to receive $100 in monthly pension. The amount matches the P5,000 that the Philippine Veterans Affairs Office gives all Filipino WWII veterans every month. US-based veterans will receive $800 a month.

ACFV Executive Director Eric Lachica, expressed optimism on the bill's chances this year. "We now have a favorable situation in Senate," he said.

"We came so close to passing the health care bill last year," said 82-year-old Patrick Ganio Sr., ACFV president.

Veteran Pete Alisuag from the neighboring state of Maryland told the INQUIRER, "I'll believe it when I see it. My wife and I have long been planning to return to the Philippines, but I need to be sure I will have benefits once we're there."

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DOTC stands pat on Piatco deal: It's null and void

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communications yesterday stood pat on the government position that the Philippine International Air Terminals, Co. Inc. (Piatco) must first accept that its contracts to build the airport's Terminal 3 were null and void from the very start before mediation or arbitration can start.

"This is not a case of simple marginal differences that can easily be ironed out through arbitration. What is under question is the contract itself," says DOTC officer-in-charge Agustin R. Bengson.

The DOTC statement was apparently a reaction to the claim of Piatco that the government had not taken steps to start the mediation or arbitration suggested by the Supreme Court.

Bengson said that since the Piatco contracts to build, operate and transfer Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport were null and void, "no rights or obligations can arise therefrom, nor from stipulations therein."

Bengson reiterated the government's position declaring the contracts null and void, following a recent appeal from Piatco's lawyers for an amicable mediation or arbitration.

Feuding shareholders

Bengson also reiterated the government's position that Piatco's feuding shareholders must first settle their disputes and reconcile their conflicting positions in relation to the government.

Finally, he said that since the issues remain pending before the Supreme Court, the case is *sub judice*

"This simply means that no party must take any untoward action, including unmerited or undue publicity, lest it unfairly influences the court's decision. This also includes, of course, the out-court appeal of Piatco for an arbitration or mediation," Bengson said.

"We in the government sector have to therefore take limited and calculated actions to avoid any possible adverse legal repercussions," Bengson said.

He added that the government's position actually takes off from the Senate blue ribbon committee, which declared the Piatco deal "null and void *ab initio*."

The Supreme Court allowed Piatco and the government a 30-day period to settle their differences over the contract. The period lapsed on Thursday.

"The Piatco contracts are void. Accordingly, the government is not obliged to comply with the dispute resolution clause in a void contract," Bengson said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo had declared the Piatco contract null and void last year on the recommendation of the Department of Justice, which said certain provisions in the original agreement were altered.

Cardeño still in RP—PNP

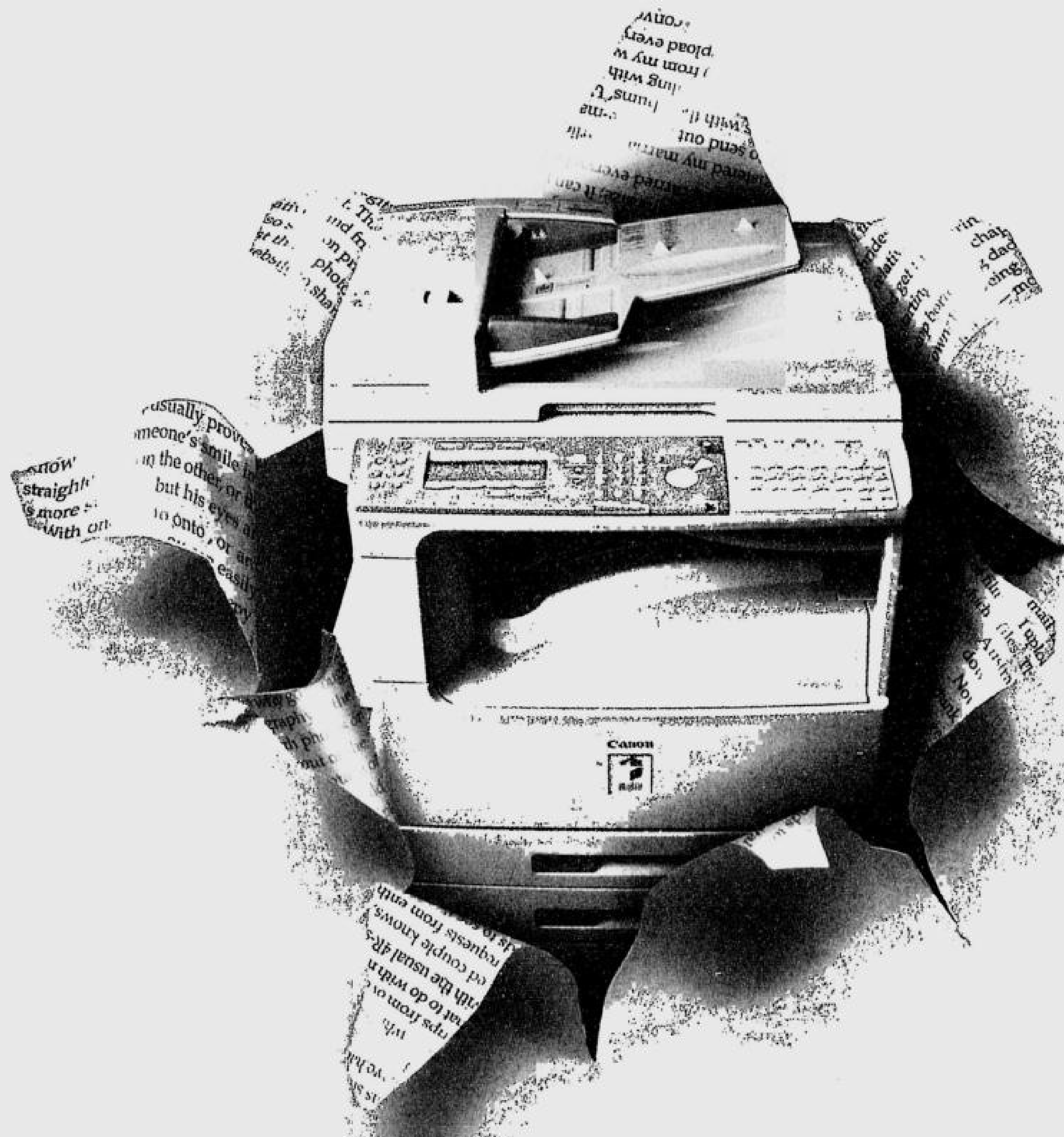
FUGITIVE Supt. Rafael Cardeño, wanted in the killing of Young Officers Union spokesperson Baron Cervantes in December 2001, might not have left the country, after all, police officials said yesterday.

"There are no indications he has fled abroad; we have no such report," said Director Ricardo de Leon, director for police community relations, when asked to comment on reports Cardeño had fled to Singapore. *(Related story on Page A23)*

"Cardeño cannot leave Manila without being detected at the airport. He has been placed on the immigration watch list since being charged with Cervantes' slay," De Leon said.

Homobono Adaza, Cardeño's lawyer, said his client was last seen in Mindanao.

Reports Cardeño might have fled came out after he failed to yield to authorities before the deadline set by Chief Supt. Romeo Maganto, head of Task Force Cardeño, which was formed to hunt for him. *TJ Burgonio*



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OPINION

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Contempt

EDITORIAL

A WISH is not always a wish; it becomes a command when it is the President who makes it. And that is the whole truth and nothing but the truth, as far as the lawyers of Joseph Estrada are concerned. So when President Macapagal-Arroyo expressed the wish that the trial for plunder of the deposed president would be finished before the end of her term, his lawyers cried that she was pressuring the Sandiganbayan to railroad the case.

"That would be my wish," Ms Macapagal said when asked by INQUIRER columnist Amando Doronila in an interview last week if she expected the Estrada trial to be concluded before the end of her term in June 2004. "I would want my successor to be free of that burden. But bringing closure is still the important thing." She said finishing the trial would pave the way for national reconciliation with justice.

That's probably the wish, too, of every right-thinking Filipino: to see the trial come to an end, see the Sandiganbayan arrive at a fair verdict and then heal the deep division between those who believe Estrada is one of Philippine history's biggest thieves and those who consider him as their savior. The Sandiganbayan justices certainly want to finish hearing the case which has dragged on for 21 months now, delaying the resolution of so many other cases. So do the government and private prosecutors, who have other tasks to do. So do those people who want to see Estrada locked up in jail permanently or worse. And presumably so do his loyal followers who are convinced he did absolutely nothing wrong during his presidency.

The problem, however, is that his lawyers don't want to see the case finished—not so soon anyway. This was clear almost from the very first day of his trial when his private lawyers filed all kinds of petition to delay the day of judgment and opposed the holding of frequent hearings to speed up the resolution of the case.

When Estrada dismissed his private lawyers and court-appointed lawyers took over, nothing changed. In fact, they are now saying it will be impossible to finish the case within the next 15 months. "It may take until 2005," Prospero Crescini predicted, saying the defense intends to summon around 80 witnesses. His other lawyer, Manuel Pamaran, said the defense should be given the same "luxury of time" as the prosecution.

Whatever happened to the eternal complaint of the unfairly accused about the slow pace of our justice system? As far as Estrada's lawyers are concerned, justice delayed is justice, period.

Why Estrada and his lawyers would stick to this strategy of delay is not a mystery. They are hoping that the elections of 2004 will usher in a friendlier administration, possibly led by an old pal or a close protégé. Their hopes of escaping conviction are anchored solely on political accommodation and not judicial vindication based on his innocence. That is how low their regard for the Sandiganbayan and our justice system has fallen.

Estrada has never tried to hide his contempt for the courts and the system. And by their words and actions, his lawyers are showing they fully agree with him. First, they are banking on politics to find exoneration for their client. Now, they are suggesting that the justices and the court are under the President's thumb. They may not have said it outright, but all their bellyaching about the President exerting "undue influence" on the Sandiganbayan or pressuring it to secure a conviction amounts to the same thing. This shows their lack of faith in the judicial system and it demonstrates their contempt for the courts.

Deepening crisis

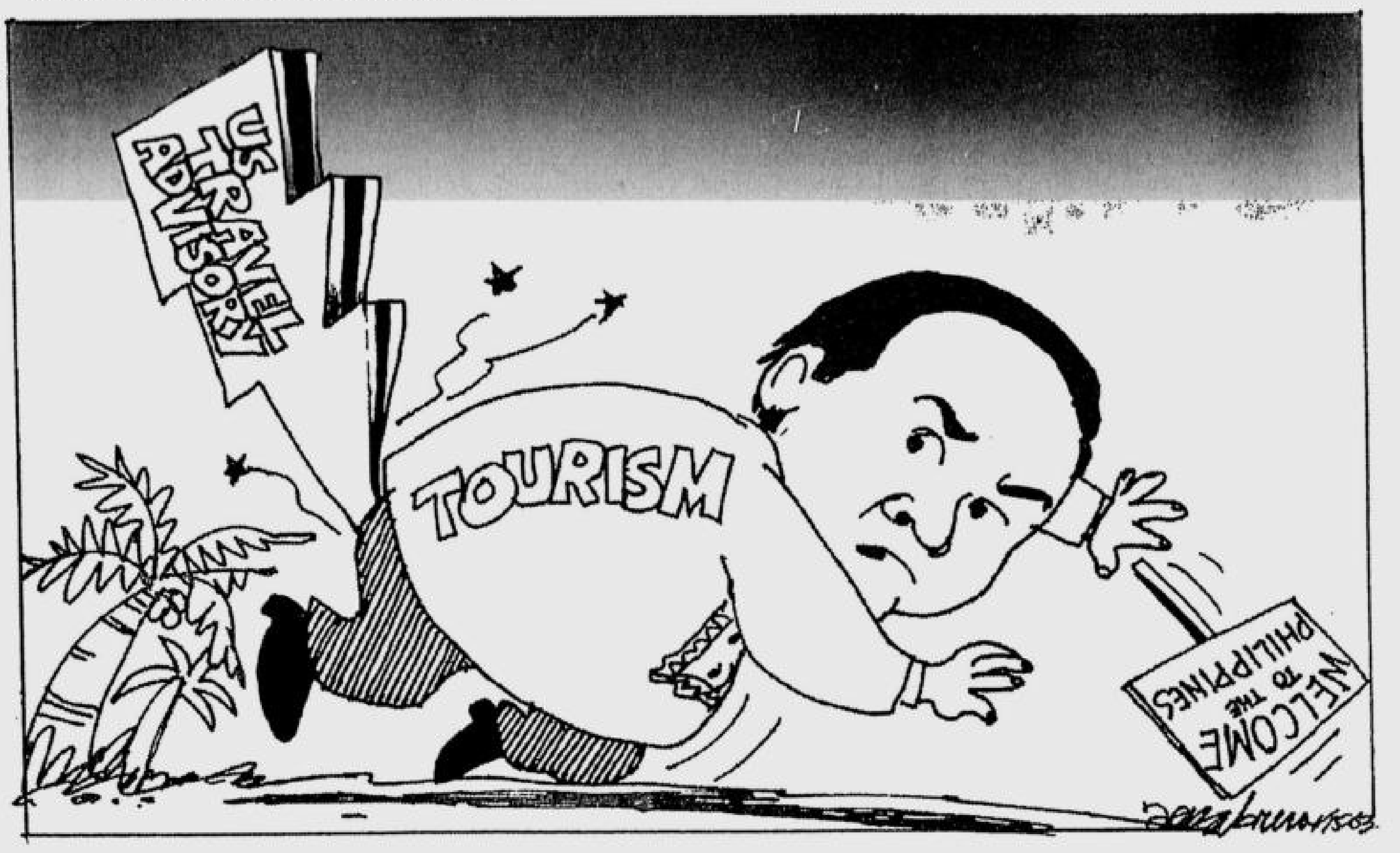
FOREIGN COMMENT

THE INTERNATIONAL community has issued a warning that it will no longer allow Pyongyang to insist on acting in a way that flies in the face of reason and accepted norms of behavior. The warning came in a strongly worded resolution adopted by the board of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The unanimous resolution strongly criticized North Korea, which has unilaterally decided to resume operations of its nuclear facilities.

We believe Pyongyang must take to heart the significance of the warning and bow to the IAEA's will immediately. The current nuclear crisis will deepen if North Korea does not toe the line.

Consequently, we believe it is vital for Japan, the United States and South Korea to cooperate in dealing with North Korea.

Yomiuri Shimbun (Tokyo)



With a Gunless Society, Llamas would still be alive

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE FATAL shooting of Ateneo law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas by a motorcycle-riding wacko after a minor traffic accident is one more proof that the issuance of gun licenses should be severely and strictly limited, as the Gunless Society has long been advocating. It is reminiscent of the killing of Eldon Maguan by Rolito Go, now serving time in prison for the killing, and a long list of similar shootings cited by the INQUIRER's editorial yesterday. The editorial attributed the shootings to the Filipino male's "false idea of machismo" and "his bloated ego" that is easily offended.

Right. But I would like to add one more reason: because the shooters had guns. Or, more accurately, the government allowed them to carry guns. Even if they believed they were macho and had egos as bloated as that of Michael Jackson, if they were not carrying guns, their victims would still be alive today and they would not be in jail. I bet the greatest regret of those in trouble now is that they ever touched any gun at all. If they were allowed to live their lives all over again, I bet they would not even want to look at a gun again.

If they had not been carrying guns then, the most that their machismo and ego would provoke is fisticuffs or a duel with knives or steel bars. But they are not as deadly as guns. At most, they'll land in the hospital; with guns, they invariably land in the funeral parlor, and the gunwielder in jail.

For a gun does something to the Filipino male that turns him into a Jekyll-and-Hyde personality. A Filipino as meek as "mild-mannered" Bruce Banner without a gun suddenly becomes a ferocious Incredible Hulk if you give him a gun. A man packing a gun should be required to hang a sign across his chest: "Please don't make me angry."

For anger releases hormones in the body that makes a person aggressive and brave but sometimes makes him lose reason. I am sure those gunwielders mentioned earlier never intended to kill their victims. But the "unreason" provoked by anger, coupled with the guns they carried made them do it. That's probably what happened to that mild-mannered family man who accidentally shot and killed the wife of the driver with whom he had an altercation over a parking space at a memorial park in Marikina. That's what most likely happened to the others.

That's what almost happened to me many years ago when I was editor of a newspaper. I closed the front pages and drove home after midnight. For protection, I always carried a revolver in the glove compartment of my car.

As I was rounding the corner of the Recto underpass to go up to España, the left front door suddenly flew open, almost hitting an overtaking car. I closed the door and thought no more of it until I came up to España. I saw that the other car was running alongside my car and that its passenger was pointing a gun at me. Anger pumped adrenalin into my body and I tore open the glove compartment to grab my gun and start shooting. Luckily, it wasn't there; I left it at home. The other car sped off and I continued driving thinking what would have happened had the gun been there? If it had happened there, there would have been a shootout, and I would have ended up either dead or in prison.

How often have we heard of machos in nightclubs shooting it out for such inconsequential reasons as giving another a dirty look or staring too much at one's woman companion. An imagined slight that one ordinarily shrugs off if he had no gun suddenly provokes an insane rage on the same person if he is packing a gun. Similarly, minor traffic accidents that can be settled by compromise and a few thousand pesos in damages suddenly become a life and death struggle for gun-toting drivers.

What I am driving at is this: Remove guns from the hands of Filipino males and there would be less carnage, no matter how macho they are. The excuse of the pro-gun advocates is that people need them for protection as the police cannot protect them. They got it wrong. People can still possess guns, but keep them at home where they are needed for protection. What the Gunless Society has long been urging is to limit the carrying of guns outside the home. If those gunwielders had kept their guns at home, they could not have killed their victims and they would not be in trouble now.

But nobody paid attention to the Gunless Society and Nandy Pacheco seems to have abandoned the movement and turned to politics instead. Maybe it is because the name is misinterpreted. It does not really mean a "gunless society." It means strictly limiting the carrying of firearms outside the home to a very select authorized few such as policemen; soldiers, security guards, cashiers and others whose jobs are to carry a lot of money around.

Unfortunately, although this is a good subject now for editorials and columns—and needed legislation—it would be forgotten as soon as Llamas is buried and forgotten by mass media. Until the next victim is shot by another wacko.

A word on the drug and psycho tests for applicants for gun ownership. Obviously, they are not an effective way to weed out those who are not qualified to possess guns. How else would those wackos have gotten licenses to own and carry guns? Psychological tests in the Philippines are very erratic ways to determine potential killers. When Sen. Panfilo Lacson was PNP chief, only he could issue gun licenses and issuances were severely limited and shootings by civilians became almost nil. With him out to the PNP, gun licensing was liberalized. Why?

Giving too many guns to civilians is an admission that the police is falling down on the job of protecting them.

Healer, heal thyself

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE VERY name of the coalition suggests its purpose. It is quite ingenious too: The December 30 Movement translates as the 12:30 Movement, 12:30 suggesting past midnight, when the hour is getting late. December 30 is of course the date when GMA announced her decision not to run again. The 12:30 coalition is made up of civil society groups, or non-government organizations for those who do not know what the heck "civil society" means, who have gathered together to rally the country around the president. It may be late in the day, their message goes, but better late than never.

The utterances from last Saturday's gathering at the Ateneo de Manila are filled with this sense of urgency and resolve. "Like in basketball, we are on our last two minutes to move this country forward," says Chaco Molina, one of the group's spokespersons. "Others say it is already too late in the day," says Dan Songco, one of the pillars of Kompil II, a movement that helped oust Erap, "but we have to take advantage of the President's initiative. We have to have a sense of urgency. We can still accomplish things." Rick Samaniego, another organizer, has one advice to give to the public, which is to follow GMA's lead and renounce self-interest. "The citizenry should also make sacrifices," he says. "Good citizens should do their part."

That is all very well, and I personally am sympathetic to the cause 12:30 advances. But as I've said before, my loyalty is not to the person but to the vision. The fact that GMA has finally—and that should always be borne of mind, the renunciation of self-interest when it came was not entirely gratuitous—agreed not to run again is a good enough reason for me to listen. It is not a good enough reason for me to jump willy-nilly into any cause she wants to pursue. If it is more of the agenda of "strong republic" and "war against terror," I will remain an unmoved and unreconstructed critic.

More than this, I also have my caveats with 12:30. At the very least, I find their metaphor of the last two minutes in basketball particularly apt. It reminds me of the old Ginebra team led by Robert Jaworski which developed a huge following but which also kept failing to advance to the finals because of one thing. Namely, that it tended to exert itself only in the last two minutes. It was a team that bungled games for most of four quarters, the players playing sloppily and without discipline, and then tried to save the day by last-ditch heroics. That is not to say that its last-ditch heroics were not spectacular—that was what drew in the hordes and their riotous adulation—it is merely to say that they were not enough. Those efforts invariably fell short of the goal. The team looked good toward the end, but ended up losing games anyway.

What makes this metaphor apt is **not** that we are bound to lose the game of national life with these last-minute heroics—though that is more than possible—but that civil society, or the NGO community, itself has been part of the team that has been bungling the game for most of four quarters. Indeed, to pursue the metaphor, for making pretty bad plays along the way. I am referring in particular to the Code-NGO's acquisition of the "Peace bonds," worth a whopping P1.4 billion, an acquisition many progressive economists have criticized as advancing the cause only of crony capitalism. The consequence of which has been to make the NGO community deafeningly silent over the last couple of years over some very patent iniquities committed by the GMA government.

At the very least over GMA's uncritical adoption of the American position in the war against terror, including her blanket endorsement of George Bush's war against Iraq, which she kept cajoling other Asian leaders to rally around to. Indeed, GMA's elevation of national security to the country's paramount concern, which tended to repose all judgment on the National Security Council. The bulk of civil society never raised their voices in protest over this, notwithstanding that that society existed above all to uphold and protect human rights, the one thing that was being crushed by the march of this folly. It was Teofisto Guingona, who became an ex-foreign secretary, and Bayan Muna, which became an ex-GMA ally, who did so.

It is not a little ironic that the Peace bonds are named thus. I know the initials stand for something else, but the acronym itself suggests where civil society's energies ought to have been directed. That is not toward war, one with the most questionable assumptions. That is toward peace, one with the most honorable intentions.

But even more than that, where was civil society when Acsa Ramirez was quite uncivilly paraded as a crook in Malacañang after she blew the whistle on real ones? That was iniquity of the highest order, notwithstanding that it was directed only at one person, or precisely because of it.

I said last Monday that for GMA to reform the society, she first needs to undo many of the things she did. She first needs to acknowledge many of the mistakes she made, not the least of them what she did to Ramirez, whom she still owes an apology. The same is true of civil society. Before you can preach, you must do. Before you can convince others to change their ways, you must change yours. The advice that the citizenry should make its own self-sacrifices applies to civil society above all. It wants to help reform the country, it should first recover its moral ground. That cannot come without sacrifice and contrition. It can start by returning the Peace bonds and apologizing profusely for it. No good has ever come from blood money.

Otherwise, all that talk of the urgency of reform and justice is just a lot of breaking wind.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Common legislative agenda

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

BOTH President Macapagal-Arroyo and opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara, have come under suspicion from their respective allies that they had cut a coalition deal behind their backs. Both have to meet their allies to reassure them that no deals had been made—the President, in caucus with administration senators after the vin d'honneur last Friday, and Angara, in caucus with opposition senators last Monday.

The President met Angara twice—the first time on Dec. 20, 2002 at the home of Ambassador Alfonso Yuchengco in Forbes, and the second time, on Jan. 7, 2003 at the President's home in Forbes. Others who attended the first meeting, aside from Yuchengco, were Dante Ang, the President's publicist, and Dondon Bagatsing, Angara's aide.

The first meeting was arranged by Dante Ang, who had earlier sent to Angara's Senate office Rony Diaz, publisher of Ang's Manila Times, and Johnny Gatbonton, to sound him out on a meeting with Ang to explore the possibility of Angara's cooperation with the administration. Diaz and Gatbonton are old friends of Angara's.

Angara and Ang met at Mandarin Oriental Hotel on Jan. 19. On request of Angara, Ang presented a written framework of discussion with three points: (1) cooperation on a legislative program; (2) participation in a government of "national unity," and (3) an offer to Angara to be Senate president. Angara asked Ang: "What will you do with Senate President Frank Drilon?" According to Angara, Ang told him it was their responsibility to get the numbers to depose Drilon.

In the first meeting between the President and Angara at the Yuchengco residence, the question of Senate leadership change never came up again. The discussion was focused on the basis of a coalition between the administration and Angara's Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino. These themes were pursued in the second meeting on Jan. 7, after the President had announced on Dec. 30 that she was not standing for election in 2004. Their meetings had boiled down to finding an arrangement for cooperation on a legislative agenda. Both were accurate when they said they never talked about constitutional change, postponing the 2004 elections or about the Senate presidency.

Sen. Joker Arroyo reflected the suspicion and concerns of other senators about the President and Angara making deals without informing them. But the conjecture that they talked about constitutional change and deposing Drilon is absolute speculation—it has no basis in fact.

The suspicion is a manifestation of the venomous skepticism and distrust prevailing in the air—in which no one trusts anyone anymore, for example, the skepticism that greeted the President's announcement to withdraw from the 2004 elections and to declare a moratorium on politics in 2003.

I surmise that if the President did not talk with Angara about the rumblings of a Senate takeover by Angara, the reason is that she is realistic enough to know that Angara does not have the numbers. Angara admitted to me he does not have the numbers, and Drilon is correct when he says the opposition needs 13 votes to unseat him, and he can't say where the opposition, which is fractured, can get the votes.

According to Angara, the Senate presidency was now open to challenge following the inability of Sen. Rene Cayetano to claim the post, in accordance with his pact with Drilon, because Cayetano is awaiting surgery in the United States. Both Angara and Drilon agree that a bid for the Senate leadership is fair game, and it is also a numbers game. But they agree that the more important issue is whether the administration and the opposition party can agree on a legislative agenda.

To my mind, because a Senate coup is dramatic news, we have tended to ignore the fact that there is a concrete foundation for a coalition on national unity based on a common legislative program. Without their being fully aware of it, the President, Angara and Drilon believe a legislative agenda is feasible, without having to have any trade-offs involving Cabinet positions or revamping the Senate leadership.

There is a precedent and a working model of a program-based coalition. The model was evolved during the Ramos administration which forged a legislative agenda with opposition leaders, without inviting them to his Cabinet. This consensus was responsible for his economic reforms that drove the economy toward the status of Asia's high-growth economies and for breaking the energy shortage during the first year of his administration.

It did not matter who was Senate president—it was Angara at a time when his LDP had more numbers in Congress than it has today. The leadership question in the Senate should therefore be treated separately from and autonomous of a legislative agenda underpinning a government of national unity.

The reconstitution of Ledac (Legislative, Executive Development Advisory Council), the mechanism used by Ramos to forge consensus on a legislative agenda, is a concrete evidence of the feasibility of a program-based coalition. Ledac met yesterday, together with opposition leaders.

In the tug of war between the introduction of a new political environment accenting programs and the proclivity for scandal-mongering, deposed President Joseph Estrada's testimony in the Senate over the Impsa deal obscures the fact that post-Dec. 30, a consensus is firming up on a legislative agenda as the starting point for a coalition for national unity.

* * *

Equal though different

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

IT'S long been recognized that the Philippine government is really run by women. From the barangay level to the highest national levels, women comprise the majority of volunteers and employees who make sure the machinery of government is well-oiled and running efficiently, and that even the most basic of government services are delivered to those who need them most.

What an irony, then that "low participation of women in decision-making positions" should remain one of the more prominent and enduring gender issues that bedevil the government service. As the gender mainstreaming guidebook "Ways to Gender Responsive Organizations" puts it: "A woman has ascended to the Philippine presidency for the second time in the country's history. However, the latest Cabinet appointments include only four women (the Departments of Labor and Employment, Budget and Management, Social Welfare and Development, and Science and Technology.)

"This makes women's participation in the Cabinet only roughly 16.67 percent. (On the other hand, this is an improvement over that of past administrations. Moreover, the CSC which is one of only three Constitutional Commissions, and the National Anti-Poverty Commission whose head is of Cabinet rank, are headed by women.)

(With the appointment of Elisea "Bebet" Gozun to the DENR, there are now six women in the GMA Cabinet.—RJD)

"Women compose a mere 34.8 percent of those at the third and highest level of the civil service. Among all elective positions throughout the country, women occupied only 15.9 percent in 1999."

* * *

UNDERREPRESENTATION of women is complicated even further by the gender tracking of occupations, with women tracked into or relegated to certain positions and responsibilities, regardless of their abilities and qualifications.

"A typical example is that of the Department of Education," says the guidebook. "More than 81 percent of public school teachers, 56.6 percent of educational regional directors, 61.4 percent of school superintendents and 46.9 percent of faculty in higher education are women. The head of the department, however, is a man. *(In fact, there has been only one DepEd woman secretary, Dr. Lourdes Quisumbing.*—RJD)

"In the Department of Health, there are about as many men as women health workers. But except for the very short stint of a female health secretary (Dr. Carmencita Reodica in 1998), a man has always held the position in recent years."

Social work is also deemed to be a line of work exclusively for women, the guidebook notes, while engineering continues to be dominated by men. "Moreover, some government agencies continue to shut out women not because of a lack of qualified applicants, but because traditionally masculine roles and characteristics are associated with the agency's functions, such as physical strength, night work, field assignments and supervision of predominantly male employees.

"Among the most telling examples are the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), and the National Power Corp. (NPC) where men outnumber women by a wide margin especially at the top."

* * *

THEN there are the issues that women civil servants share with all other women—women's multiple burdens that straddle the productive and reproductive divide and aggravated by the lack of a support system; and violence against women including sexual harassment in the workplace.

With the Constitution guaranteeing equality of men and women under the law, government is mandated to ensure that this guarantee applies to all aspects of governance and rights.

"If government is to lead," points out the guidebook, "it should practice what it espouses in principle, otherwise its credibility could be challenged. Government has to serve as an example in providing women equal opportunity and in implementing affirmative action programs where disparities in male and female participation exist. This requires no less than a planned and systematic review and reform of an agency's mandate, its vision, mission and goals, and its budget and programs. It would be easier to convince the private sector to cooperate for women's empowerment if it sees that the government is set on pursuing gender and development."

* * *

WHAT does it gain an organization to achieve gender fairness?

A gender fair organization, it was pointed out, creates a "vast reserve of highly competent, diversely skilled and strongly motivated women and men." Gender fairness in terms of hiring, training and promotion also "minimizes 'brain drain' from government and reduces turnover." And lastly, gender-fair organizations "strengthen the credibility of government."

What does becoming a gender-responsive organization entail? "Being gender responsive entails being aware of the perceptions and attitudes of women and men about each other, about their work and about the world in general. Resources could be used more strategically if these differences were considered in the designing and conduct of training and development programs."

The twin goals of gender mainstreaming: to ensure the equality of men and women; as well as to get government to recognize their differences, would seem on the surface to contradict each other. And yet that is what gender responsiveness requires, for paradoxically, it's in recognizing the differences between women and men that makes real and practical equality possible.

"Different but equal" has long been used as an excuse to perpetrate unevenness in treatment, be it in gender or race. Perhaps what we should keep in mind is that the differences should have no bearing on equality in law, culture and relationships.

Understandable historical flaws in film and art

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

SOME friends must think so low of me that they misinterpreted my desire to see the recent Lapu-lapu film starring Lito Lapid as a prelude to a nasty review in this column. One need not kick a man who is already down. Even constructive criticism comes very late at this point. My interest in the recent Lapu-lapu film stems from my being a teacher of undergraduate history; the film is a gauge of what the people behind the film read, a measure of their (mis)education, a reflection of their concept of the pre-colonial Philippines. Most of the criticism I heard from a playwright who endured half an hour of "Lapu-lapu," had something to do with costumes and other production details. This is unforgivable because we have many reference books available, we have museums that have study collections of artifacts from the period, we have archeologists and anthropologists who could be consulted for a better picture of life in 16th-century Cebu and Mactan.

There is a show in the Ayala Museum, ongoing till the end of the month, that also gives us a glimpse of the interaction between art and history. This is called "Fernando Amorsolo's Brush with History" that gathers together a number of his historical paintings. Better known for his brilliantly lit landscapes, flattering portraits and genre paintings of tanned smiling *dalagas* in traditional costumes, Amorsolo's historical painting is a departure from his regular commercial output. One could say that Amorsolo, through his paintings, helped form the picture of the pre-colonial Philippines that many Filipinos keep in their heads today. Interviewed in 1939, Amorsolo described a mural he had just completed: "I have painted hundreds of objects and I have gone far and near to satisfy the tumultuous craving in my heart. But there is not one which has thrilled me and given me more satisfaction than 'The First Baptism in the Philippines,' a large historical painting which was ordered and paid for by the Cebu High School.

In the first place, the picture is of historic significance; it depicts a very historical event in our history. The rendering of the whole composition is really in accordance with my art, and to my mind, my colors were in perfect harmony."

Even in terms of size, the painting in Cebu was a work of large dimensions, different from his usual easel-sized paintings. First, "Baptism" required many detailed sketches and studies for each figure and every object like mats, jars and pieces of Oriental ceramics that comprised historical details for the finished painting. All these diverse elements were drawn, color studies completed and carefully set in the over-all composition, before being transferred to the large canvas. The effect may have been striking as history, but somewhat theatrical or contrived as painting.

Amorsolo is said to have undertaken painstaking historical research. He read Pigafetta and other available 16th-century Spanish accounts of the Philippines and the Filipinos. He consulted prominent scholars of the time, namely Trinidad H. Pardo de Tavera and Epifanio de los Santos. He dug up visual sources on 16th-century Spanish costumes, arms and armor that would have been worn by Magellan and his men. More complicated, however, were the costumes of the pre-colonial Filipinos for which there was little or no visual reference in Amorsolo's time. Aside from artifacts in the pre-war National Museum and a handful of private collections in Manila, Amorsolo based his costumes and weapons largely on those still in use by thriving cultural communities.

A handful of his extant works in pencil and oil comprise visual documentation of Mindanao costumes particularly those of the Bagobo, known for their colorful and intricate beadwork. In reconstructing images of the pre-colonial past, Amorsolo had to supplement the scant historical material at his disposal with his imagination.

While Amorsolo read widely, he was naturally limited by the state of historical research available in his day. For example, two paintings, "Princess Urduja" (which depicts a masculine pre-colonial princess and her band of Amazons) and "Sale of Panay" (which depicts the Bornean datus buying Panay from Negritos for the price of a golden *salakot*), used to be highlights of pre-colonial history, until they were debunked in the 1960s as myths. However, it is unfair to judge Amorsolo on the basis of what we know today. Despite his careful and meticulous research, there were occasional slips. For example, in a painting described as "Early Sulu Wedding," there is something quite striking: the bride kneeling in front of an imam is topless except for her garland and gold necklace. Her headdress was inspired by Indonesian rather than Philippine examples. In another canvas depicting the encounter between Miguel Lopez de Legazpi and a chieftain in Manila, one can clearly see two distinct types of shields carried by the warriors. One is a Bagobo shield (from the South) and the other a Kalinga shield (from up North in the Cordilleras), making the props visually interesting but historically unlikely.

It is easy to find historical flaws in historical paintings and period films but it is more difficult to use these to reflect on the use of imagination in the continuing interpretation of history.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Preparing to fly after 9/11

HIGH BLOOD

Violeta Hughes-Davis

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —Ed.

AFTER TERRORISTS crashed two planes into the World Trade Center, many people shelved their domestic and international travel plans. My own son, who classifies as an American *probinsiyano* being born and raised in Ohio and never took to flying, finally found the perfect excuse to postpone a trip to the Philippines. Some of my friends who had been looking forward to visiting their families in Manila cancelled their airline reservations. I knew that traveling after 9/11 would be different, but I had no idea how much. As for its being dangerous, I am not quite willing to concede. Somehow, my mind refuses to accept that I put my life on the line whenever I step inside an airplane. With this attitude, my husband and I flew to Columbus, Ohio last April 2002, unwilling or unable to think we were taking a risk. Worried about whether the driver would get us to the airport on time, I could not think about bomb-throwing fellow passengers. It was not so much that I feared being blown up to bits; it was more that I could not conceive that any terrorist would use the Manila-Ohio flight corridor to strike again. Besides, I cannot imagine my body as a lifeless, bloody form. The possibility simply seems too remote, much like the image of an airplane flying directly into a concrete tower.

Departing from the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) emphasized for me the reality of the new way to fly. Here I heard a new verb, "to wand." Seeing that I did not understand what she meant, the airport inspector asked more explicitly: "May I have permission to wand?" to know if she could pass the magnetic wand around my torso, my outstretched arms and my parted legs. Of course, we had previously been "patted" all over. In addition, my husband was asked to extend out the front of his trousers so the inspector could peer inside. After having been "wanded," we were asked to remove our shoes, an aftermath of the "shoe bomber." We discalced not only once, but twice: immediately after we entered the secure area of the airport and again right before boarding the aircraft. I wore sandals for this purpose, but my husband who wore his hiking boots in an attempt at *pa-porma*, paid for it by having to lace and unlace his shoes twice.

We flew into Columbus, Ohio via Detroit, Michigan, on a Northwest Airline flight and I must have been more jet-lagged than usual because I did not notice the air marshals in the Columbus airport. I noticed them only two days later when we returned to the airport on our way back to Manila. The airport in Columbus, Ohio is not a major international hub like O'Hare in Chicago or Kennedy in New York. It is a small-scale operation with one concourse serving 22 boarding ramps located on one floor. In fact, Columbus residents used to wink when they say "Columbus International Airport," knowing that its grandiose name hardly matched its size. Minor renovations and modest expansions have changed its character; it has remained user-friendly and easy to get around in, so it was a shock to see it last April 2002. Remember when American tourists used to make fun of Manila for the countless numbers of armed men in our public buildings? Now we can turn the tables on them when we see their airports. Tight security requirements have transformed little American airports into armed camps teeming with uniformed air marshals. It all looks unreal as if it were all a game but we took it all in stride, thinking that we would quickly get through check-in, have a drink and hibernate in a corner to steal a few catnaps. It was not to be, for unfortunately, the airport computer randomly picked out our luggage for a thorough check. It meant tearing off tapes, opening boxes, taking out contents, unwrapping each item, then fitting them back and taping the boxes again. One look at my two Balikbayan boxes taped like mummies, led a surly inspector to decline the job, saying that there was not enough time to check them as thoroughly as required. I was more stressed-out by him than by the thought of any terrorist because he could have made us miss our flight. I was relieved when another inspector proved undaunted by my boxes, although I felt sorry for her when she had to lift out a microwave oven, bottles of salad dressing, dozens of books, etc. and fit them back in again. She cheerfully repacked every article into the box and then just as meticulously taped the boxes shut. Surprisingly, each of the boxes arrived in one piece at the Naia.

After we were cleared at the check-in area, I thought we were home free, but I was wrong. Each of us was stopped two more times: my husband who routinely fails the magnetic barrier because of forgotten pens or coins in his pockets and I for a pair of small embroidery scissors. Up until this time, I had been nonchalant, but when the inspector confiscated the scissors, I almost lost it. Those scissors belonged to my mother; it was a precious heirloom. Besides, they were too small to hurt anyone, yet the inspector ignored a much larger object that I was carrying in the same bag, a sharp metal tool that manicurists use for digging into the sides of one's nails, definitely more harmful than my mother's miniature scissors. In their haste to show concern for travelers' safety, airports have been too quick to employ personnel who are inadequately trained. The inspector's failure to spot the manicurist's sharp metal tool was just one example. More disquieting was another inspector's unfamiliarity with the intricacies of a video camera bag. She was posted at the boarding platform, the last barrier to entering the aircraft. As she fumbled with my husband's video camera bag and its numerous compartments and elaborate closing straps, it was obvious that she was totally unfamiliar with such a piece of luggage. My husband had to show her how to open and close the compartments. If he had been a terrorist and had stuffed components of a bomb into the different pockets of his bag, he could have easily fooled her.

If the airport inspectors' obsession with small sharp objects was frustrating, Northwest Airlines' overreaction was comical. How else can you explain substituting plastic knives for metal ones, at the same time retaining the standard airline metal fork? My husband and I estimated that the metal fork could do more damage than the knife and wondered what a terrorist could accomplish with a short table knife. What's more, the plastic knife was esthetically out of place on a table service with crisp white linens. One wonders whether Northwest executives discussed the policy thoroughly before deciding on it or whether they just gave in to the first knee-jerk reaction that come along.

In any case, our trip was uneventful and we landed smoothly and safely in the Naia. No innocent-looking fellow passenger metamorphosed into a scissors-wielding fatalist, and once again, Filipinos in the control tower demonstrated their unerring competence even with the Naia's outdated equipment.

Violeta Hughes-Davis, 63, is an international education specialist who retired from the Ohio State University.

Will tariff policies be revised?

IN HER Jan. 10 economic policy speech, President Macapagal-Arroyo said:

"I am adopting tariff policy signals to encourage the manufacturing sector. The Philippines is ahead of WTO requirements. Our tariff policies were crafted a decade ago in the heydey of globalization. Unbridled globalization is no longer in vogue. The 1997 Asia crisis and 9/11 have since hit us. Our tax collections are short. I am instructing Neda, DTI and the Tariff Commission not to be married to the idea that our tariff program can no longer be revised. I am adopting the policy to slow the program pace only to Afta and WTO minimums and to take full advantage of all exception windows allowed, such as for the petrochemical industry."

This is the first official heresy registered by a President of the Philippines concerning globalization since President Marcos proclaimed his 11 major industrial projects. It deviates from the dogma that calls for more liberalization. Marcos' heretical projects were instantly torpedoed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund when Marcos sought loans to finance them. Will President Macapagal's heresy suffer the same fate?

The President's second thought on globalization (her first thought accessed the Philippines into the World Trade Organization) deserves the fullest support of the Filipino masses of workers, peasants and urban poor, especially as it relates to manufacturing. Let us all rally behind her second thought and press her to translate it into concrete policies and programs to make manufacturing our economy's spearhead.

For it is manufacturing, not agriculture and/or the service sector—which alone can generate meaningful jobs for the large and still rapidly growing Filipino work force, most of whom are now unemployed or underemployed. And our manufacturing sector has been the principal victim of liberalization, globalization's tariff-leveling tentacle. Outside the globalization-inspired export processing zones, which employ cheap and docile workers and hardly pay taxes, there are very few remaining factories now and the few survivors are operating at 40 percent of capacity or less. The President's move is timely and, if decisively pursued, will make a difference.

If President Macapagal does to our manufacturing sector what President Bush did to America's steel industry, she deserves the support of every Filipino workingman. If she does not, then all the elaborate publicity about her not seeking election in 2004 is empty.

—AMADO GAT INCIONG,
Inciong and Associates, Unit 301,
Union Square Condominium,
145 15th Avenue, Cubao, QC

Not retained by Banco Filipino

VICTOR Agustin, with actual malice and premeditated intent to harm, again libels our firm.

Our firm has always acted with the highest standards of competence, diligence and integrity.

Agustin makes a deliberate falsehood. The firm has not been retained, quietly or otherwise, and is not counsel to Banco Filipino in any effort to collect P18 billion or any amount in damages against the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

A retraction and apology from Agustin is demanded.

—BARBARA ANNE C. MIGALLOS,
Roco Kapunan Migallos Perez &
Luna, 16/F Strata 2000 Building,
Emerald Avenue, Pasig City

No member of South Luzon Motorcycle Association

THE COMPLAINT of Evelyn Bondoc of Talisay, Daet Camarines Norte is most unfortunate and might put other motorcycle riders in a bad light. The members of the motorcycle club complained of are really Caucasians and some Filipinos who can afford to own Harley Davidsons or very expensive motorcycles. To be a member of the Mad Dogs Motorcycle Club is too much for an average biker who drives a motorcycle for convenience and to avoid the horrendous traffic problems in our country.

Only a handful of our members own Harley Davidsons, but do not have Mad Dog tattoos on their biceps, their symbol of superiority on two wheels. If they did what Bondoc claims to have been done to four Bicolanas, the club should be banned from going to the Bicol region.

The members of the Southern Luzon Motorcyclists Association Inc., (SLMAI) simply enjoy going to the Bicol region because of the very friendly and hospitable people we meet on the road up to the end of the south road in Matnog, Sorsogon. The SLMAI is composed of several motorcycle clubs in the Calabarzon area, the members of which perform community services, more than just traffic management and conducting lectures on road courtesy under the supervision of the Action Center of DOTC and Traffic Management Group of Region 4. Mad Dog is not a member of the SLMAI, and the SLMAI can only express regret for what happened to the four Bicolanas last Dec. 6, 2002.

Because of the letter of Bondoc, we have postponed our scheduled trip to Daet, Camarines Norte on Jan. 31 to avoid any untoward incidents on the road.

—BENJAMIN S. MANAS,
chair, SLMAI, 218 Maligaya St.,
USPS, San Pedro, Laguna

An appeal to the Honorable Members of
The Senate and The House of Representatives

Sapagka't mahal pa rin namin ang Pilipinas...

We are Global Filipinos.

We, too, are sons and daughters of our Motherland. Napadpad sa iba't-ibang panig ng mundo dahil sa matinding pangangailangan. To find work with which to support our families in the Philippines. To seek a better future for ourselves. To excel in our professions. Or to escape persecution during the Martial Law years.

Malayo man kami, we have continued to care for our country, our relatives, our friends, our people. We remit billions of dollars every year – salaping pinagpapawisan naming kitain, sukdulang kami'y paalipin – in order to feed, clothe, house, educate and provide a decent life for our loved ones.

We have helped to build schools, churches, community centers and playgrounds in our hometowns. We have responded unselfishly when calamities have struck. We support scholars, join medical missions, and visit our homeland whenever possible and as often as possible.

Those of us who have fulfilled our goals overseas have made plans to return home. And those of us who now live permanently abroad continue to help. Hindi kami nagpapabaya.

Recently, Her Excellency President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo warned that our country and government must "reform or perish." We are deeply concerned over this. We cannot stand idly by and watch the collapse or disintegration of our beloved country. Simply sending money and aid is not enough. We want to be directly involved in the process of reform.

In recognition of our affection and concern, the Honorable Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, convening as a Bicameral Conference Committee, are deliberating on the Absentee Voting Act, in order to reconcile the provisions of their respective versions. The result, hopefully, will be a historic opportunity for overseas Filipinos who are still citizens of the Philippines to exercise the right of suffrage as mandated by the Constitution.

We are grateful to our Legislators for this. We are also grateful to President Arroyo for promising to sign the Bill into Law upon presentation to her. Taos-puso kaming nagpapasalamat.

Sa bagay na ito, mayroon po lamang kaming ipakikiusap sa Bicameral Conference Committee.If you truly recognize the vital role we play in the survival and progress of our country, and if you truly acknowledge our rights as Filipino citizens, we ask you not to curtail these rights.

The basic principles of the Law are clear and unequivocal:

- All Filipino citizens are entitled to equal rights under the Constitution. (Art. III, Sec.1)
- All qualified citizens have the right to vote. (Art. V, Sec. 1)
- No substantive requirements will be imposed on the exercise of suffrage. (Art. V, Sec. 1)
- The Congress shall provide a system for absentee voting by qualified Filipinos abroad (Art. V, Sec. 2)

Yet, in the face of this Constitutional mandate, House Bill No. 3570, the House version of the Absentee Voting Act, would:

- Limit the right to vote to temporary overseas workers and deprive permanent overseas residents of the same right, even if still Filipino citizens.
- Limit those allowed to vote to cast their votes only for candidates for President and Vice-President.
- Limit the effectivity of the Law to the elections in 2004 – and no further.

In contrast, Senate Bill No. 2140, the Senate version of the Absentee Voting Act, would:

- Allow all qualified overseas Filipinos who are still citizens of the Philippines to vote.
- Allow us to vote for candidates for President, Vice-President, Senator and Party-List Representative.
- Allow registration and voting by mail, in line with accepted practice in many countries, including the United States.
- Make the Absentee Voting Law applicable to all Philippine elections, from 2004 and beyond.

While there are still limitations imposed on our exercise of suffrage, we understand why and are grateful to the Members of the Senate for giving us our due. We now appeal to the Members of the House of Representative to do likewise, to respect and to impose no substantive limits on our exercise of suffrage.

Huwag niyo po naman kaming pagkaitan.

The Senate has also approved Senate Bill 2130, "An Act Providing For The Retention Of Citizenship Of Philippine Citizens Who Acquire Foreign Citizenship."

A great number of us will be affected and benefited by this Bill if it becomes Law. In America alone where over 3 million people of Filipino descent reside, approximately 70 percent are US citizens, by birth or by naturalization.

Gano'n pa man, Pilipino pa rin kami – sa isip, sa puso at sa dugo. We care for and contribute to the welfare of the Philippines and our fellow Filipinos. At lalo pa kaming makakatulong if we are allowed to retain our Filipino citizenship.

We respectfully urge Congress to pass the Citizenship Retention Bill into Law.

Nagpapasalamat at gumagalang -

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Pandaigdigang Pilipino

Global Filipinos is a coalition of leading overseas Filipino organizations and individuals who are asserting our place in the global community and are committed to promote the welfare and progress of our Motherland.

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A salute to the President

AS a Filipino, I salute President Macapagal-Arroyo for sacrificing her political ambitions by not standing for election in 2004. So, to give the President a lasting tribute, let us rally behind her quest for national unity for the sake of this generation and the generations yet to come.

Hanga ang buong sambayanang Pilipino sa ginawa niyang sakripisyo. Isang bagay na hindi matutularan ng iba.

—GODOFREDO O. PETEZA SR.,
J.P. Rizal St., Baranrgay Camambugan,
4600 Daet, Camarines Norte

Unpleasant surprises at the Naia

MY family and I decided to spend the Christmas holidays in Manila, despite the advice of well-meaning friends who pointed out that the Philippines was "prominently included in the terrorist alert." We went ahead, fully aware of the inconveniences typical of holiday travel to Metro Manila: lost (or even stolen baggage), overbooked flights, long lines of *balikbayan* boxes at the airport counters, grinding traffic, etc. What we didn't expect were the surprises awaiting us at the immigration counter of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia).

We sent our children a week earlier, accompanied by their maternal grandfather who fetched them from Hong Kong. Being American citizens currently residing in Hong Kong, we consulted the Philippine consulate regarding the necessary documentation for putting our children under the care of a close relative. We were informed that all we needed to do was write a consent letter signed by both parents.

When our children arrived in Manila, they were hit with a fine of P6,240 (P3,120 for each child) for not getting the right paperwork done in Hong Kong. This "visa waiver" was news to us, since no one in the consulate advised us about it. The immigration personnel threatened to keep their passports if we didn't pay.

When my husband and I arrived a week later, the immigration officials gave my husband, who holds a British passport, only seven days to stay in the country. If he wanted to extend his stay, he'd have to pay a fine, we were told.

Again, this was news to us. He'd been traveling back and forth to Manila on business for years, and was never placed under such restrictions. Once again, we protested that the Philippine consulate never informed us about this "new law."

The immigration officer told us, "Don't worry. Just pay the fine at the cashier when you depart."

But he missed the point. This was not about the money. It's about the total disregard for consistency and clarity between what advice the Philippines consulate dispenses and what the immigration office enforces. (But come to think of it, this is about money: the money that lines the pockets of corrupt BID bureaucrats.)

We were detained for an hour as we refused to pay yet another fine. We stuck to our guns because their questions showed glaring inconsistencies in this supposed "new law." After some heated argument, they admitted that they had made a mistake.

Needless to say, both experiences left us utterly frustrated and doubtful about traveling to the Philippines again. You can put away all your glossy ad campaigns and tourism slogans. While the threat of terrorism and heavily publicized lawlessness in most of Metro Manila streets didn't keep me and my family away from the Philippines, this recent experience will.

—NAME WITHHELD ON REQUEST

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Immediate attack on Iraq seen unlikely

WASHINGTON—Despite the new year's flow of thousands of American troops to the Gulf, political and logistical pressure could delay any invasion of Iraq for months, US officials and defense experts said on Monday.

"Those soldiers can't just hit the sand shooting on arrival. I wouldn't expect anything in February, or even early March. And who knows what the political landscape will be then?" one US official said.

He and other officials, who asked not to be identified, spoke as international pressure grew for Washington to put off any invasion of Iraq. The issue is also complicated by Iraq's suffocating summer heat and sandstorms, in which the US military would prefer not to wage war.

Military analysts said they did not expect an immediate attack but warned that the Bush administration had painted itself into a difficult corner with the new troop movements.

"It's not the end of the world if you have to bring them home in May before summer, then send them back in November or December," said Michael Vickers of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments in Washington.

"If sending troops now ends up in diplomatic concessions from Iraq. Then there's no egg on your face. You say the threat worked—you avoided war and got something for it, even if it cost billions of dollars," Vickers said.

But former Assistant Defense Secretary Larry Korb, now with the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, said the buildup could soon reach a point of "use it or lose it."

"I believe administration expected to be in a position by the end of this month to to go or not go. But it looks longer now. And that's tough politically," Korb said.

Suggesting that any invasion was not imminent, the White House stressed despite repeated warnings to Iraq's President Saddam Hussein that President George W. Bush had set no timetable by which UN arms inspectors must complete their hunt for banned Iraqi weapons.

"The president thinks it remains important for the inspectors to do their job and have time to do their job," presidential spokesperson Ari Fleischer told reporters on Monday in response to questions. "The president has not put an exact timetable on it."

The comments came after a spokesperson for the International Atomic Energy Agency said in Vienna that UN resolutions provided timelines of "somewhere between six and 12 months" for inspections even as Washington massed a major military force on orders from Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld.

Since late last week, Rumsfeld has signed two orders to send an additional 67,000 troops to the Gulf, a move that could give the US military nearly 150,000 soldiers, sailors, airmen and marines in the region by the end of February.

"But even if you get the troops there, big logistical tasks remain in getting them married up with tanks and other equipment and getting them ready to pull together and fight a war," said one US defense official.

"We could be looking at months here," said another. "And you run into high temperatures starting in late May."

The summer months are also marked in Iraq by the southern and southeasterly sharqi, a dry, dusty wind with occasional gusts to 50 miles an hour 80 kph that stirs sand to foul engine intakes and damage helicopters.

Another defense official said the Pentagon was concerned that Turkey had not yet agreed to allow as many as 75,000 US troops to launch a possible spearhead from that country into northern Iraq if Bush made the decision to go war. But he noted that US military inspection teams were assessing possible improvements to bases in Turkey in case of a future agreement.

Saudi Foreign Minister Saud al-Faisal said in interview from Riyadh on Monday that a war against Iraq would be a catastrophe for the region, even if the UN Security Council declared Iraq in material breech of United Nations resolutions.

"At least give us a chance (to see) what is possible. If we don't succeed, those working for war can have their war as they please, which is going to be a catastrophe for the region," he said on NBC's "Today" program.

Top UN inspectors Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei go to Baghdad next weekend to demand Iraq account for missing stocks of such items as chemical bombs, nerve gas and missile engines.

But they appeared anxious on Monday to slow the timetable of the attack the United States threatens to launch if Iraq's answers fail to satisfy.

"No to war!" Pope John Paul said in an address on Monday.

Germany, a new UN Security Council member, is strongly opposed to an invasion.

After a meeting with Rumsfeld in Washington last week, Canadian Defense Minister John McCallum left open the possibility of joining any US-led attack against Iraq, but suggested that his country wanted to give the UN inspectors time to do their work. *Reuters*

At the request of **Saudi Telecom, Globe Telecom** is suspending **Cellular Mobile Telephone System, (CMTS)** pre-paid international roaming service in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia effective **January 31, 2003**. However, international roaming service in Saudi Arabia will continue to be available to our post-paid subscribers. In addition, IDD and international text messaging services will still continue to be available to Globe Telecom CMTS subscribers.

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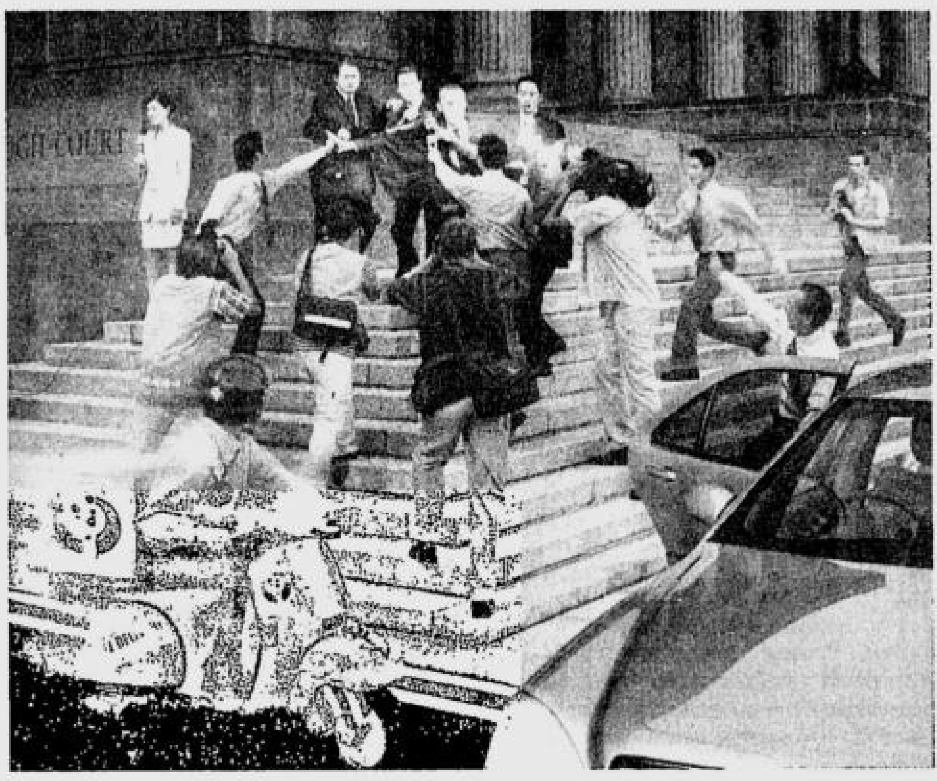

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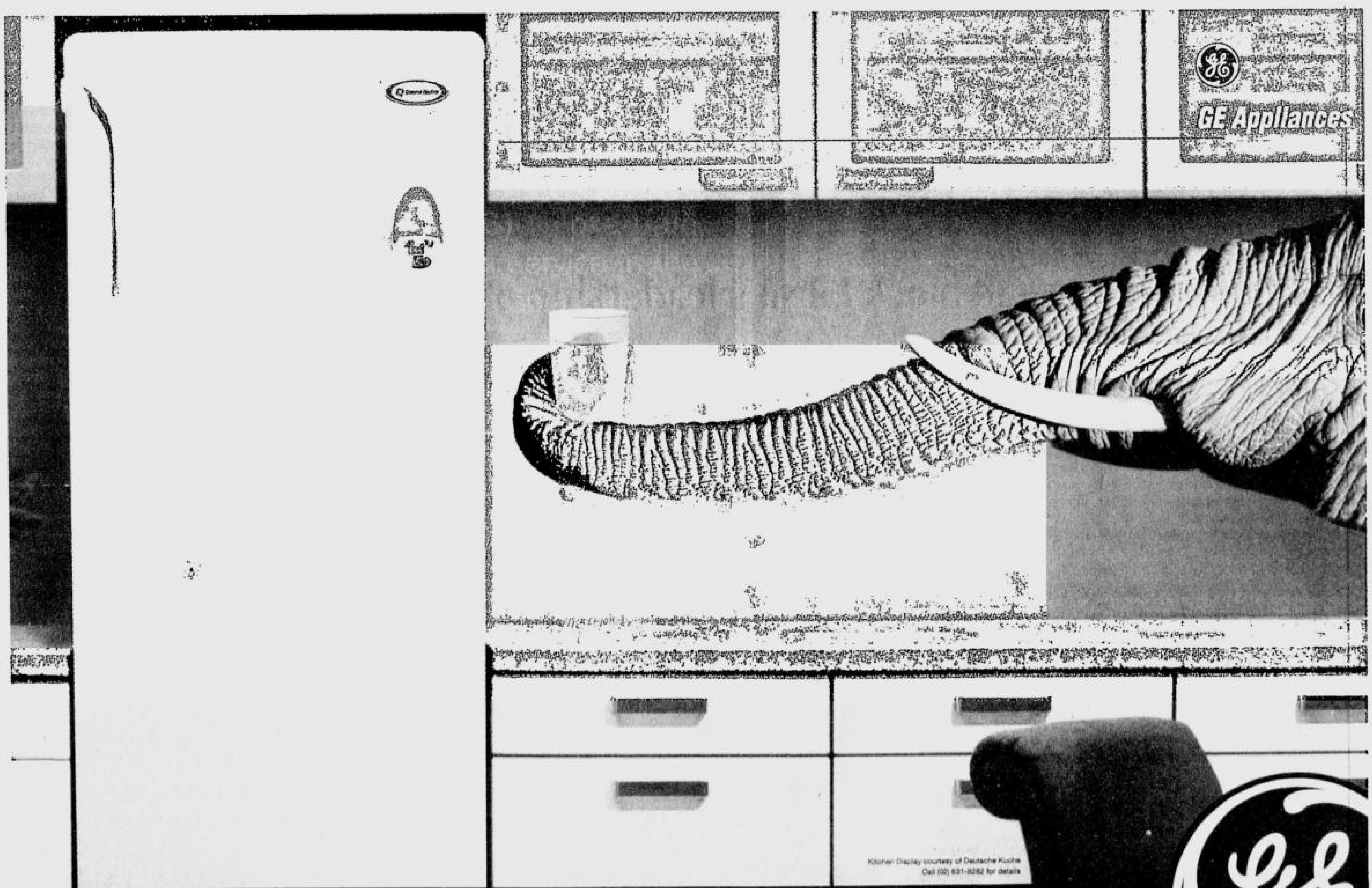
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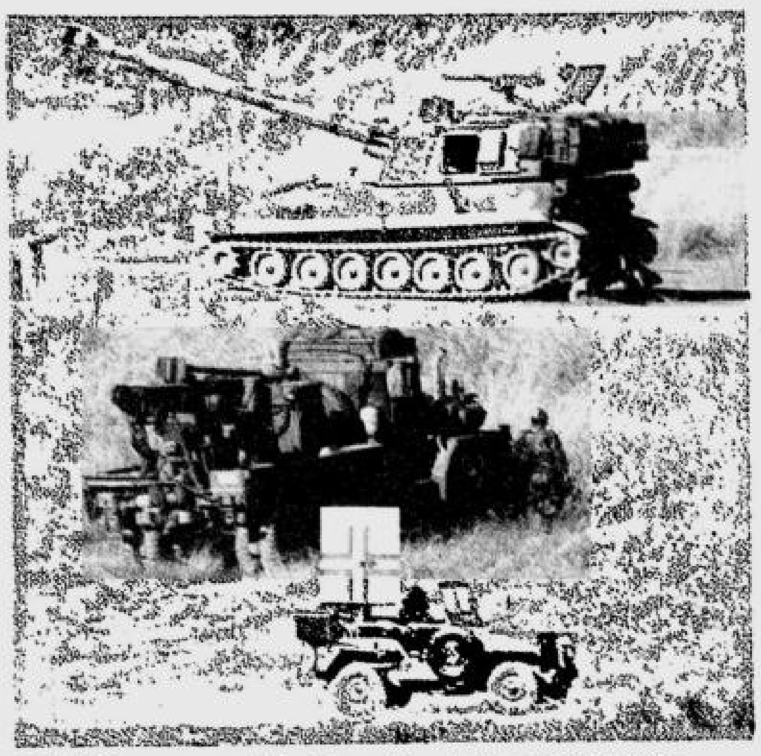


SOUTH Korean army vehicles take part in a training session near the demilitarized zone that separates the country from North Korea Jan. 14. In the event of a conventional war, North Korea could unleash over 500,000 rounds of artillery an hour on Seoul. REUTERS

US, N. Korea seek compromise

SEOUL—North Korea and the United States appeared to be reaching out for compromise Tuesday as South Korea suggested the three-month-old nuclear crisis could be easing.

US envoy James Kelly, who leaves Seoul later Tuesday for Beijing, met top advisors to President Kim Dae-Jung following a meeting on Monday with Kim's successor, president elect Roh Moo-hyun.

At the one-hour meeting with Roh, Kelly was eager to reassure South Korea that Washington was not considering military action against North Korea, while a military buildup was under way against fellow "axis of evil" member Iraq.

"We don't have to be too concerned about the nuclear issue because envoy Kelly made it clear in the meeting with the president-elect that dialogue should be pursued to resolve the nuclear issue," said Roh's top advisor Choung Dae-Churl on KBS radio.

"On the Korean peninsula, where the two sides are so close, the tactics which are being applied to Iraq will not be applied," added the aid said Pyongyang, which Kelly said admitted to running a nuclear programme in October, is a bigger threat to world peace than Iraq.

That revelation by Kelly sparked a standoff that has left in tatters the 1994 Agreed Framework under which Pyongyang promised to freeze its nuclear ambitions in return for international aid to overcome an acute energy crisis.

Since December North Korea has prepared to reactivate its mothballed Yongbyon nuclear plant, expelled UN monitors and withdrawn from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Pyongyang has also said it may end a moratorium on long-range missile tests.

North Korea has repeatedly accused the United States of planning a preemptive nuclear strike on the country and has demanded a non-aggression pact before it will discuss scrapping its nuclear programs.

Washington, which believes Pyongyang already has one or two nuclear bombs and could make sevits nuclear schemes.

Roh and Kelly discussed a compromise way out of the crisis whereby North Korea would abandon its nuclear weapons drive and Washington would deliver some form of security guarantee, a longstanding demand of North Korea, Choung said.

Roh, elected on December 19 on a wave of anti-Americanism, is a strong advocate of engagement as a way of resolving the three-month nuclear standoff.

Indications that Pyongyang, despite threats to turn the United States into a "sea of flames" may be looking for a way out come Monday when the Stalinist state's ambassador to Moscow said it could reverse its withdrawal from the NPT.

Earlier Monday Kelly suggested Washington was also ready to step back from the brink by offering the North inducements for coming back into line with their commitments under international nuclear accords.

Though Washington said there was no policy shift, South Korean officials, keen to clear a path to compromise, insisted that North Korea would indeed stand to benefit from generous international help.

"The consistent message from the international community is that North Korea will receive a lot of benefits if it abandons its nuclear development," a top presidential official told journalists.

On Tuesday, Kelly continued a round of high level talks here, meeting Lim Dong-Won, top advisor on North Korea to President Kim, champion of engagement with the North. *AFP*

Washington blinks in nuclear crisis, analysts say

By Charles Whelan

SEOUL—Washington appears to be shifting its stand on North Korea amid criticism of its failure to engage the Stalinist regime over its nuclear weapons drive, analysts here said Tuesday.

"I think every indication points to progress in efforts to engage in dialogue," said North Korean expert Lee Woo-Young of the state-financed Korea Institute for National Unification.

Analysts suggest furious efforts coordinated by Pyongyang and conducted by North Korean diplomats in Asia, Europe, the United Nations and the United States over the past few days may have finally forced Washington to blink in the three-month crisis.

US special envoy James Kelly suggested here Monday at the start of a five-nation Asian tour that the United States and other nations were ready to ease Pyongyang's energy crisis if the North scrapped its nuclear weapons drive.

Though Washington denied its hardline stance was wavering, analysts detected a change in tone, if nothing more.

"Through Kelly's visit, the United States has toned down its position a little bit," said Kim Sung-Han of Seoul's Institute for Foreign Affairs and National Security.

"Previously Washington said North Korea must first dismantle its nuclear weapons programs, and only then could it hope for dialogue. Now Washington says Pyongyang only has to say that it will dismantle its programs then it will get negotiations."

In October Kelly said North Korea, which in 1994 promised to freeze its nuclear weapons ambitions, had been secretly engaged in a plan to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons.

The charge sparked a standoff that has left in tatters the 1994 Agreed Framework providing international aid to North Korea in return for the nuclear freeze.

North Korea ratcheted up the tension by firing off verbal broadsides at the United States while expelling UN nuclear monitors and withdrawing from the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). *AFP*

British rock star linked to child porn

LONDON—British rock star Pete Townshend was released on police bail after being questioned by detectives on suspicion of possessing indecent images of children but has not been charged, his lawyer said on Tuesday.

Police said the 57-year-old guitarist with legendary band The Who had been bailed to reappear at a police station in late January after being quizzed by officers for more than an hour on Monday night.

"Mr Townshend has been at the station this evening answering questions from police. He has not been charged," the musician's lawyer John Cohen told reporters. "He's been bailed to come back perhaps at a future occasion if they want him to answer more questions."

Townshend was arrested on Monday after police involved in Britain's largest-ever operation against pedophilia descended on the rock star's mansion in Richmond, southwest London. They took away boxes full of computers and other equipment.

Later Townshend looked stony-faced as he was driven away by detectives after being held on suspicion of possessing indecent images of children, suspicion of making indecent images of children and on suspicion of incitement to distribute indecent images of children.

Townshend, who has said he believes he was abused as a child, acknowledged on Saturday he had downloaded child pornography from the Internet but insisted he had done it for research purposes.

"I am not a pedophile. I think pedophilia is appalling," the guitarist, who is married with three children, said in a statement. *Reuters*

HELP ON A COLD MORNING

Homeless Indians are given food distributed by a Hindu temple during a cold morning in New Delhi Jan. 14. Icy winds sweeping across large parts of northern India, Bangladesh and Nepal have claimed the lives of at least 800 people in a month-long cold spell. REUTERS

Man attempts to sneak into HK in suitcase

HONG KONG—A Pakistani man who tried to sneak into Hong Kong in a suitcase carried by another traveler has been sentenced to 18 months in prison, newspapers reported Tuesday.

Raja Kamran, 24, pleaded guilty Monday to charges of entering Hong Kong without permission and violating a deportation order, the English-language daily South China Morning Post and other newspapers reported.

Judiciary officials said they did not have information on the case, which was heard Monday at the Kwun-Tong Magistracy.

Hong Kong Immigration Department spokesperson Teresa Wong confirmed Tuesday that immigration officials had caught Kamran when they checked the suitcase, allegedly carried by Indian national Pardeep Singh as he crossed the border with mainland China at Shenzhen, Dec. 26.

She said the large size of the suitcase, which measured 81 centimeters by 55 cm had raised suspicions. *AP*

Woman seeks return of $233M

DUBAI—A Kuwaiti woman has filed a court case demanding that an Emirati national return 856.9 million dirhams ($233.5 million) she had entrusted to him, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

The businessman, identified as Jaber Ali H.S., had refused to hand back the huge sum of money when asked to do so by Hanan Abdul Samad A., the Gulf News said.

Hanan filed a case with the civil court in the Gulf emirate of Dubai and also demanded interest on the amount.

Why she had given him the money and where she got it from was not mentioned. *AFP*

US intensifies drive to block Libya's leadership of UN panel

WASHINGTON—The United States on Monday stepped up a campaign to deny Libya the chairmanship of the UN Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR), saying the body's credibility was at stake.

State Department spokesperson Richard Boucher said Washington would break with past principle and call for a vote on the leadership of the commission when it meets at the United Nations in Geneva next week to determine its new chair.

Libya is currently the only candidate for the post.

"We are opposed to Libya's candidacy for chair of the UN Human Rights Commission," Boucher told reporters. "We intend to call for a vote when the selection process takes place in Geneva and we intend to vote against Libya.

"We hope that other countries will do so as well," he said, calling Libya a well-known "abuser of human rights" that has in the past supported terrorist acts such as the 1988 bombing of a PanAm jet over Lockerbie, Scotland.

"We cannot reward such terrible conduct with a leadership position, in this case, in the foremost international human rights body."

"We're seeking to ensure the credibility of the UN Commission on Human Rights as we resume our membership in the organization," Boucher said.

The United States lost its seat on the commission in 2001 in what was widely seen as a reaction to perceived US unilateralism in its foreign policy and was absent from the body in 2002.

It won election to the commission for 2003 only after intense lobbying and its maiden initiative in the UNCHR against Libya is likely to spark a furor in the body, which usually decides such matters by acclamation.

US officials have privately expressed little hope of succeeding in the bid.

"We're pushing hard, but it's a steep slope," one senior official told reporters, noting that while other nations might agree with the United States on the matter few were likely to go along with a fundamental change in the way the commission selects its chair.

State Department officials told AFP last week that the United States had launched a campaign against Libya and instructed its diplomats in the 52 other member countries to seek support.

Boucher confirmed the drive was underway and would continue until the selection on Jan. 20.

"It's not appropriate to have Libya in the chair of this organization," he said. "We are pushing for a vote. We'll continue to do that as we head toward the moment when countries are called upon to take a stand." *AFP*

UNJOINED

Separated twin Maria de Jesus wears a tiara at UCLA's Mattel Children's Hospital in Los Angeles, Jan. 13, before the 17-month-old returns to her native Guatemala. Two toddlers, born fused at the skull, were separated Aug. 6 in a 23-hour operation. Their return home was delayed to give them time to recover. AP

War on terror seen stifling rights

BANGKOK—The focus on security in the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States has led to perhaps the worst marginalisation of human rights in Asia in decades, Human Rights Watch said in its annual report Tuesday.

The United States came in for particular criticism for its willingness to overlook human rights abuses in a bid to bring Asian governments on side in its ongoing war against international terror.

"When the planes crashed on Sept. 11, they drove a large hole through the region's fragile human rights architecture," the New York-based rights watchdog said in its 30th annual report.

"Perhaps more broadly than anywhere else in the world, the United States muted its criticism of opportunistic repression in Asia so as not to offend governments otherwise cooperating in the war."

Many of the region's governments that sought to implement policies restricting human rights took advantage of the new political space provided by the war on terror, the report found.

"While there was a need in some countries for new laws to deal with issues such as money laundering, most proposed or newly enacted legislation was notable for limiting the rights of criminal defendants and narrowing civil liberties, such as freedom of expression and freedom of association," the report said.

Protests by local activists over new legislation "fell largely on deaf ears".

The leaders of India, Nepal, Cambodia, Malaysia, and Singapore in particular "were pleased to accommodate the new security agenda, which neatly dovetailed with their aspirations to increase state power and marginalize political opponents," the report said.

Human rights activists meanwhile found that taking a stand against the actions of their governments left them in a difficult opposition to their once-allies in the West, and their donors, it said.

The report noted that even the ten-member Association of South East Asian Nations agreed to cast aside their policy of non-interference to cooperate on law enforcement and extradition matters—a first in the history of the organization.

The need for support in its war on terror from Asia even prompted the United States to propose Malaysia as the home of a new regional anti-terror body, despite the continued use of the country's draconian Internal Security Act (ISA), which can be used to detain people indefinitely without trial. *AFP*

Koizumi visits war shrine anew

PRIME Minister Junichiro Koizumi (left) is led by a Shinto priest during a visit to Yasukuni Shrine in Tokyo honoring Japan's war dead Jan. 14. REUTERS

TOKYO—Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi visited a controversial shrine honoring Japan's war dead on Tuesday, triggering anger in China and South Korea at a time when the three are trying to cool tensions over North Korea.

Koizumi, known for his nationalist views, has outraged Japan's former World War Two enemies twice in the past by visiting Tokyo's Yasukuni Shrine, seen by critics as a symbol of the militarist regime that led Japan into war.

The shrine is dedicated to Japan's 2.5 million military war dead since 1853, including several convicted war criminals.

A solemn Koizumi bowed as he left the shrine after briefly paying his respects, accompanied by a priest in white robes.

China's foreign ministry summoned Japan's ambassador in Beijing and issued an angry statement in response.

"This mistaken move has seriously damaged the political foundation of Sino-Japanese relations," Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Zhang Qiyue said.

"It has also hurt the feelings of Asian victims, including Chinese," she said, referring to tens of millions of Chinese killed or injured during China's eight-year war against Japan which ended in 1945.

South Korea also denounced the move.

"We feel anger and disappointment about the visit to Yasukuni Shrine," its foreign ministry said in a statement.

This visit comes at a particularly sensitive time as the three countries are trying to work out, with Washington, how best to deal with North Korea's nuclear weapons program.

North Korea has also lambasted Koizumi for past visits.

Koizumi said before the visit that it was aimed at promoting peace.

"In the new year, I would like to visit the shrine with a new feeling of gratitude about peace and with the thought that we must never start a war again," he told reporters.

War veterans are a key part of Koizumi's support base, essential as he faces an election for the presidency of his ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in September, and the visit comes at a time when his ratings are under pressure.'

The prime minister outraged China and South Korea in 2001 when he visited the shrine two days before the August 15 anniversary of Japan's surrender in World War Two.

Last year, he sought to lessen the controversy by making an unannounced visit in April.

But China still responded angrily, postponing a trip to China by the Japanese defense minister and what would have been a historic visit to Japan by Chinese naval vessels.

Asked how he would explain the latest shrine visit to China and South Korea, Koizumi said: "I explained last year.

"I would like them to understand that there's been no change in the friendship between our nation and theirs."

Koizumi has previously said he visited to pay respects to those who died and to vow that Japan would never again wage war.

Japanese media said the timing of the visit—before new leaders assume office in South Korea and China—appeared to be an attempt to minimise the diplomatic fallout.

South Korea's president-elect, Roh Moo-hyun, will be inaugurated in February, a ceremony Koizumi is considering attending, and new Chinese Communist Party chief Hu Jintao is expected to take over as President in March. *Reuters*

Suspect admits involvement in Bali blasts

JAKARTA—A newly detained suspect in the Oct. 12 Bali bombings confessed within hours of his arrest to playing major planning and operational roles in the attack, police said Tuesday.

Senior Indonesian officers said Ali Imron was the "field coordinator" of the blasts and is the younger brother of two suspects arrested soon after the explosions ripped through the resort island's nightclub district and killed 192 people, most of them foreign tourists.

Ali Imron and another suspect identified only as Mubarak were picked up by authorities on a remote Indonesian island on Monday, apparently trying to flee Indonesia.

Imron quickly confessed under interrogation, said police Gen. I Made Pastika, who is heading the investigation.

"Imron has admitted to being connected with the Bali bombings," Pastika said.

Imron admitted driving a minivan packed with explosives to a road junction close to the Sari nightclub, where most of the victims were killed, Pastika said. He then was replaced by a second driver who parked the vehicle outside the club just before detonation, he said.

Pastika said Imron also attended a key meeting in central Java province to plan the bombings.

"Therefore his role is very important," Pastika told Jakarta's El-Shinta radio station.

Lt. Gen. Erwin Mapaseng, chief of national police detectives, said Imron was the "field coordinator" of the bombings while Mubarak was involved in financing the attacks. He did not elaborate.

Pastika said earlier that Ali Imron and Mubarak were believed to have been planning to travel by boat to the neighboring Philippines or Malaysia when they were nabbed on Berukan island, near Samarinda, the capital of East Kalimantan province, around 1,300 km northeast of Jakarta.

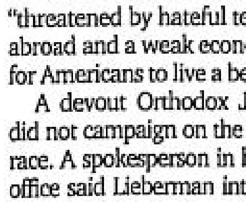
Pastika said 12 other people detained Monday with Imron and Mubarak were not suspects.

So far, 17 men have been arrested in the case, including two of Imron's older brothers.

The first suspect arrested in the case was his brother Amrozi, who is accused of buying bomb-making materials and the minivan used in the attack. *AP*

Lieberman says he will contest US presidency

STAMFORD, Conn.—Democratic Sen. Joseph Lieberman declared on Monday he will run for the US presidency, which could make him the first Jewish president in the nation's history.



LIEBERMAN

Lieberman, 60, who already made history in 2000 as the first Jew drafted as a vice presidential candidate when he shared the losing Democratic ticket with Vice President Al Gore, told a small audience at his alma mater, Stamford High School, that he was running to "make the American Dream real again."

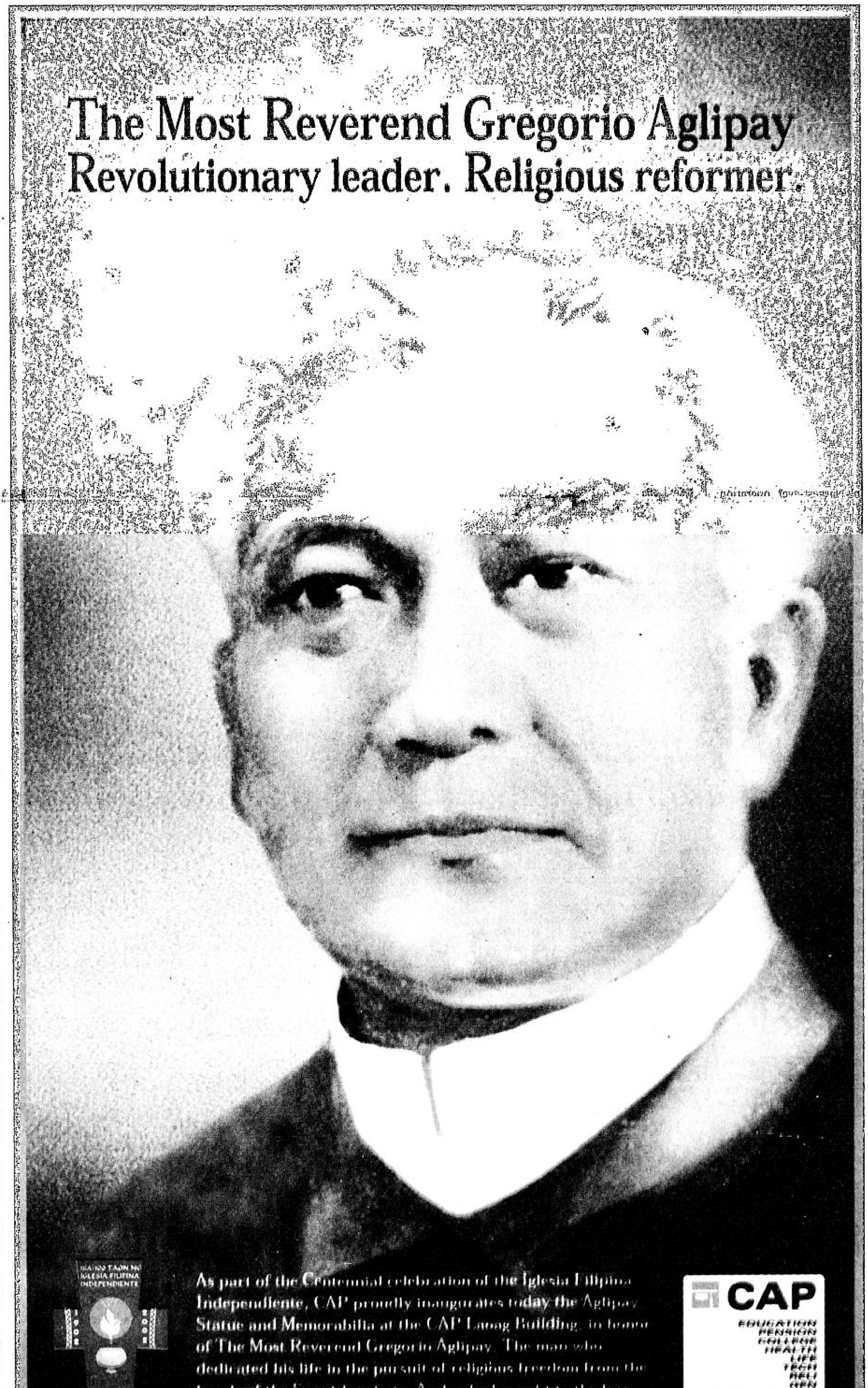
Freed by Gore's decision not to make another bid for the White House, Lieberman told the crowd of well-wishers, "I am ready to announce today I am running for president in 2004."

"In the coming months, I want to convince Americans that I have the strength, the vision and the values to lead our nation to higher and safer ground," he added.

"The American Dream is in jeopardy," he said, "threatened by hateful terrorists and tyrants from abroad and a weak economy that makes it harder for Americans to live a better life."

A devout Orthodox Jew, Lieberman routinely did not campaign on the Sabbath during the 2000 race. A spokesperson in his Washington campaign office said Lieberman intended to continue to observe the laws of his religion during this campaign.

Asked in Stamford how he thought the American people would respond to his religion, Lieberman said he would not hesitate to talk about faith, and he cited the Declaration of Independence and its protection of rights and liberties endowed by "the Creator." *Reuters*



The Most Reverend Gregorio Aglipay
Revolutionary leader. Religious reformer.

As part of the Centennial celebration of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, CAP proudly inaugurates today the Aglipay Statue and Memorabilia at the CAP Laoag Building, in honor of The Most Reverend Gregorio Aglipay. The man who dedicated his life in the pursuit of religious freedom from the hands of the Spanish priests. And, who brought to the fore the Filipino clergy's role in our nation's revolutionary history

A14

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Appointment of new DPWH C. Luzon director delayed

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Outgoing Public Works Secretary Simeon Datumanong ended the confusion and conflict that was shaping up over the legitimate director of the Department of Public Works and Highways in Central Luzon.

Datumanong resolved the issues by putting on hold the reassignments of Alfredo Tolentino, DPWH Central Luzon director, and his supposed successor, Josefino Rigor, DPWH Ilocos director.

In a memorandum issued last week, the secretary cited the "interest of the service" on why he was deferring the implementation of their reassignment orders, including that of three other regional officials.

Datumanong said the reassignment would be "held in abeyance until further advice."

The memorandum, dated Jan. 9, was received here on Monday as confusion among the DPWH personnel grew since Rigor assumed the post last Thursday on the strength of Department Order. No 26.

Rigor brought a copy of the order to show this to Tolentino but the latter was out of his office for a field inspection.

No formal turnover happened on Friday as Tolentino declined to relinquish the post, explaining that he had yet to receive Department Order No. 27, instructing him to assume the Region IV-B post covering Palawan and Occidental Mindoro.

"Let me clarify that I am not clinging to the post. I simply waited for my order, which was the standard procedure in the department. Since I received no official copy of it yet or even a verbal order, I could not immediately hand over the post or move to my next post," Tolentino told the INQUIRER.

Rigor did not report for work here on Monday and Tolentino spoke before an assembly of DPWH personnel after the flag ceremony to clarify the suspension in the reorganization. But reports here announcing that Rigor had assumed the Central Luzon post did not help put an end to the confusion.

At least three employees assigned at the regional director's office confirmed getting calls inquiring on who the current DPWH chief is. They said among the callers included local politicians who endorsed Rigor.

At the provincial capitol, Pampanga Gov. Manuel Lapid, who admitted supporting Rigor, was reported expressing displeasure over Tolentino's retention.

However, the 20 Central Luzon congressmen signed a resolution appealing to Datumanong and President Macapagal-Arroyo to retain him, citing the need for "administrators whose competence, industry and dedication to work are beyond reproach." *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Ex-NPA rebels behind ambush of mayor's nephew, police say

ARAYAT, Pampanga—Police officials tagged a barangay captain, reportedly the founder and leader of a band of former New People's Army rebels, as the brains behind the ambush that killed three men and wounded two others here on Monday.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pampanga police director, on Monday night ordered a manhunt on Mel Lumbang, barangay captain of Lacquios and reported chief of the Rebolusyonaryong Gerilyang Arayat (RGA).

Mendoza said he issued the order after investigators found a deed of sale in the van from the 4:30 p.m. ambush on the group of Chito Espino, Mangga Cacutud barangay captain.

Espino, a nephew of Mayor Benigno Espino, was the president of the Association of Barangay Captains here.

Barangay Captain Espino suffered from at least three bullet wounds in the body.

The deed of sale, according to Mendoza, was in the name of Lumbang.

The search for Lumbang by the police's elite team from the provincial mobile group went futile on Monday night up to Tuesday morning.

"He was not found. Several houses were checked but he couldn't be traced," Mendoza told the INQUIRER.

The ambush, said to be the first in 20 years here, killed Barangay Captain Espino's security aides Fernando Martinez and Marcelo Perez, a police report said.

Mendoza said a man, identified as Popong Magat, also known as Ka Reggie and an RGA member, was killed when Espino's group returned fire.

Ramoncito Galang, another aide of Espino, was seriously hurt in the ambush at Mangga Cacutud, 3 km east of the town proper.

The five suspects fled toward Nueva Ecija using a red pick-up truck.

Mayor Espino on Tuesday confirmed to investigators that his nephew and Lumbang had conflicts over local politics. However, he declined to comment or confirm the involvement of Lumbang in the incident.

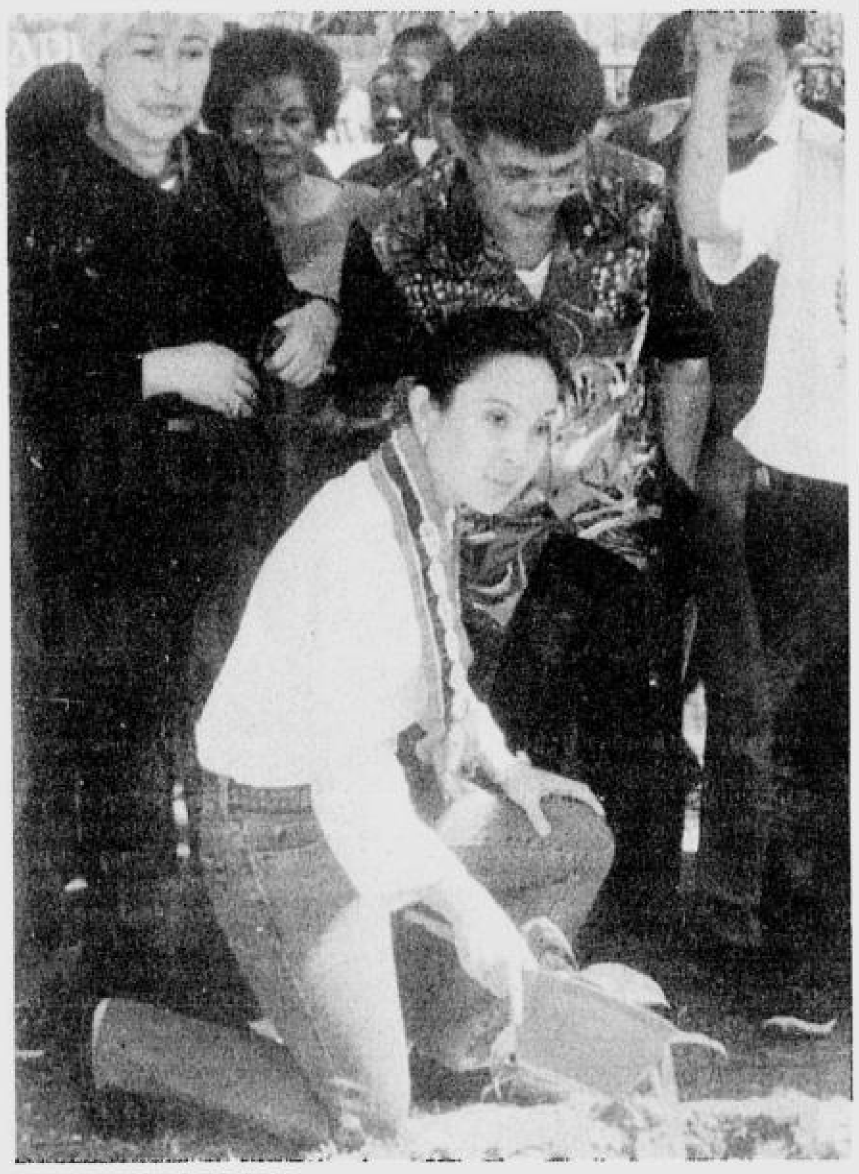
"The victim is my relative and I don't want to be perceived as unduly influencing the investigation," he told the INQUIRER.

As base of the anti-Japanese Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan (HMB) and its precursor the Hukbalahap during the 1950s, Arayat was site to numerous bloody clashes between the Constabulary and rebels that maintained Mt. Arayat as a lair, residents said.

According to police sources, Lumbang founded the RGA in 1997, gathering forces from the ranks of former NPA rebels.

To date, RGA members are hounded by the NPA and its breakaway faction, the Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan, and the remnants of the HMB.

Lumbang, in an interview two years ago after a police crackdown on loose firearms traced to several of his men, denied having any links with the RGA. *Tonette Orejas with a report from Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



TALLEST FLAGPOLE
Sen. Loren Legarda plants a tree during the groundbreaking rites for the construction of probably the tallest flagpole in Mindanao. She is accompanied by Zamboanga City Rep. Celso Lobregat and Zamboanga State College Marine Science and Technology president Dr. Caraecle. DON DONDOYANO

Remnants of plane that crashed in Palawan found

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Remnants of the Nomad plane that crashed in the waters of Cagayancillo on Sept. 2, 2000 were found by a fisherman in Mangsee Island, Balabac town, which is located several miles from the crash site.

Pistoh Hamjia, president of the Association of Barangay Captains in Balabac, said a certain Jentik Hussein found the wheel of the Nomad 86 and the helmet of the pilot a month after the crash but he was not able to report it to the authorities as he was in a far island.

Hamjia brought the wheel of the aircraft to the provincial capitol to have it inspected by aircraft technicians as to whether it was indeed a remnant from the Nomad plane.

Nobody thought that other parts of the Nomad would reach Balabac because it is situated on the southern tip while Cagayancillo is in the northern part near Panay and Guimaras Islands.

Gov. Joel Reyes, who was then the vice-governor when the Nomad plane crashed—killing then Gov. Salvador Socrates, Western Command Gen. Santiago Madrid and 12 others, said they would consider the possibility of searching in the opposite direction rather than staying in the periphery of Cagayancillo.

"It might have been brought about by the massive undercurrent movements in the waters of Cagayancillo," he said.

The search went on for more than two months to as far as Iloilo and the Panay Islands using high-tech gadgets of Teknik Gora, a ship used for the construction of underwater pipeline equipped with sonar facilities, which could detect metals and other remnants in deep seas.

So far, no one of the 12 missing passengers was recovered except that of Madrid whose body immediately resurfaced minutes after the crash.

Australian Bruce walker, said to be the best friend of Madrid, survived. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

7 Cordillera natural parks recommended for protection

BAGUIO CITY—Department of Environment and Natural Resources officials are recommending the inclusion of seven natural parks in the Cordillera in the list of protected parks.

Leo Viray, chief of the Protected Areas and Wildlife Division (PAWD) of the regional DENR, said these parks have better quality and potential for bio-diversity programs than some of the parks listed under the agency's National Integrated Protected Area System (Nipas).

Viray said the sites recommended for Nipas inclusion are the Roces Cave in Bucay, Abra; Aran Cave in Tuba, Benguet; Mt. Posuey natural park in Boliney, Abra; and the Mt. Calawitan natural park at the border of Sabangan, Bontoc and Bauko towns in Mt. Province.

Others are the Agora wildlife sanctuary in Pudtol, Apayao; Quiling crystal caves in Dolores, Abra; and Nagan-Apatan River natural park in Dolores, Abra.

Viray said they would hold consultations with indigenous peoples living in the identified areas to discuss the implications of the Nipas inclusion.

Most of these areas are being claimed by indigenous peoples as their ancestral domain.

Viray said a protected area should not be occupied by settlers to protect its biodiversity. But he said they would also consider the right of indigenous peoples to their ancestral lands since the Nipas law recognizes this.

He said the features of the areas proposed for Nipas inclusion can even surpass the quality of the bio-diversity of Mt. Pulag national park in Benguet, Mt. Data in Mt. Province, Balbalan-Balbalasang national park in Kalinga and Kasamata Hill national park in Abra. *Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

8 children die in measles outbreak in Cotabato City

COTABATO CITY—Eight children have died in the past 15 days in a remote village here following an outbreak of measles, the city health office reported.

Fifteen other children, aged 9 months to 10 years old, have also been afflicted with the disease, according to city health chief Dr. Abdullah Dumama.

Aladin Darping, chair of Barangay Kalanganan 1, sought the help of the city health office only last week.

Dumama told the INQUIRER that a team of medical workers was dispatched to the village, which can be reached only through the city's river tributaries, to check the outbreak.

"We have enough vaccines as compared to last year's supply," he said.

"The casualty figure is very alarming," Dumama said.

"The residents should have reported the disease earlier," he stressed. He said the residents' reluctance to cooperate with workers compounded the situation.

At least 63 children have been immunized by a team of government doctors who were dispatched Friday in Kalanganan 1, a predominantly Muslim village of fisherfolk off the mouth of the Rio Grande de Mindanao.

Dumama said the disease was "imported" by relatives of some residents.

"The visitor from Maguindanao was positive with the measles virus and he didn't know that it was on its stage where transmission is high," Dumama said.

Since parents have the attitude of not allowing their children to be immunized, they easily contracted the measles, Dumama said.

"Parents refuse to have their children immunized because of lack of information [on its importance]," he said.

Despite the city health office's outreach program to educate the parents about immunization, some parents remain reluctant.

"They would tell us why subject their kids to injection [process of immunization] when they are not sick at all," Dumama said.

Even with eight fatalities in their midst, some parents still refused to have their children immunized, he said.

"Parents hide their kids, others migrate to other areas," Dumama said of the three-day massive operation to arrest the increasing measles victims in Kalanganan.

"There's the danger. Once kids with measles migrate to other areas, the possibility of spreading the disease is very high," he said.

On Monday, another team of health workers proceeded to Kalanganan and continued to conduct an education drive on sickness prevention. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Fire hits Davao City Hall

DAVAO CITY—A fire of still unknown origin broke out inside an office at the Sangguniang Panlungsod building here on Sunday noon. F02 Jerardo Buncalan, arson investigator of the Central Fire Station, said the fire occurred at the office of Margarito dela Cruz, the city council's assistant secretary. The Bangoy Fire Station immediately responded and put out the fire. De la Cruz said a janitor discovered the fire and tried to douse it out before calling the fire station for assistance. The fire destroyed a chair and a filing cabinet.
Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Cavite jailbreak

IMUS, Cavite—A drug-crazed prisoner charged with raping his neighbor last Dec. 31 escaped from his cell here by breaking the concrete wall with a piece of cylinder metal on Sunday night, police said. Larry Bersonal, 33, single, tricycle driver, a native of Dingle, Iloilo and residing in Barangay Malagasang 2, this town is now the object of police manhunt. Initial investigation revealed that the suspect destroyed the concrete wall, which encloses the sliding metal lock of the custodial cell.
Fausto Tatad Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Quick dump disposal

LEGAZPI CITY—The city government will buy two trailer trucks to bring the city's garbage to a dump in upland Barangay Banquerohan in the southern part of the city. The move is aimed at saving time and gasoline, according to Mayor Noel Rosal. Six compactors and dump trucks transport the city's garbage to the dump daily and each vehicle has to go back and forth more than once, Rosal noted. Most of the vehicles are already depreciated and the city is spending more to maintain them, he said.
Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

NPA couriers yield

CAMP NAKAR, Lucena City—Four confessed New People's Army couriers, who have expressed their desire to live a normal life, surrendered to a military official in Victoria, Oriental Mindoro on Thursday. A military report identified the four as Romulo Castillo, Vicente Pulmos, Reynaldo Andaya and Patricio Roda. Col. Juanito Gomez, acting commanding officer of the 204th Infantry Brigade based in Oriental Mindoro, said the rebel returnees, who are all jeepney drivers, admitted their alleged involvement in the mobilization efforts of the communist rebels. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Coconut lumber seized

SARIAYA, Quezon—Police seized three cargo trucks and an estimated 42,000 board feet of undocumented coconut lumber worth about P45,000 were seized here Saturday at a checkpoint in front of the municipal hall along the Maharlika Highway. Police said six suspects were arrested. Authorities found that the permit to transport the coconut lumber, in different cuts and sizes, had already expired. The cargo came from Tayabas and Pagbilao towns. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Traffic cop shot dead

CALAMBA CITY, Laguna- Three unidentified men gunned down a 43-year-old traffic police while resting on the terrace of his house in this city. PO3 Fernando Niega, of Barangay Palo Alto and assigned at the Calamba police station, suffered several bullet wounds in the body and was declared dead on arrival at the Calamba Doctors' Hospital. City police chief Senior Supt. Heneroso Calderon said the victim had just arrived with his wife Feliza and daughter Michelle from Barangay Paciano Rizal when he was shot at around 8 p.m. Sunday. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Police informant killed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Five men were arrested while a civilian police informant was shot dead in a shabu buy-bust operation in Brgy. Bayanan, Bacoor, Cavite. Slain was Joseph Nopies, 23, and a civilian agent of the town's police station. Police conducted the operation, in coordination with members of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Authority, to arrest Enrico Medina, a suspected drug dealer. The police arrested suspected drug pushers Eduardo Gabriel, 25; Marcelino Castillo, 24; Benito Po, 21; Francisco Pascual, 37 and Celso Miranda, 38, who were trapped inside the house. They are now detained at the Bacoor police station and undergoing police interrogation.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Slain caregivers' families lament Israeli aid delay

By Tonette Orejas,
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Mei Magsino,
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE RELATIVES of two Filipino caregivers killed in a suicide bomb blast in Israel last August bewailed the delay in the release of financial help promised by the Israeli government to their families.

"There's been no help since (she was buried)," said Herminio Lagunilla, elder brother of Adelina Cunanan, a native of Minalin, Pampanga.

In the last four months, Lagunilla said the embassy has yet to make true its promise to help facilitate the release of insurance claims worth P400,000 to Cunanan's family and P300,000 to her parents.

He also said they have yet to receive the monthly pension of P30,000 to Cunanan's family and P10,000 to her parents.

He added that his sister's jewelry, which the Israel government promised to send back through the Department of Foreign Affairs, have not arrived despite their requests.

Lagunilla said they submitted all the claims documents to the embassy and had followed these up on behalf of the family.

"I just found that we are supposed to' be getting only one thousand shekels (Israel currency) every month since my sister died," Febe Ruga, Rebecca's older sister said.

"But until now, we haven't received even that," she lamented.

Febe, who works as a caregiver in Israel, said contrary to the reports in August last year of financial assistance from the National Insurance Institute-Ministry of Labor in Israel, her inquiry resulted in a very disappointing answer.

"I thought we were supposed to be receiving at least $2,000 a month," Febe said. "But it's now only 1,000 shekels, equivalent to only P10,000."

Adelina, a native of Minalin, Pampanga, and Rebecca, a native of Bansud, Oriental Mindoro, were two Filipina caregivers killed in the suicide bombing in Haifa, Israel on Aug. 5 last year.

The two victims were in a bus bound for Sefat from Haifa in Northern Israel.

A day after the bombing, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said both Cunanan and Ruga were legitimate workers entitled to benefits including repatriation costs, lump-sum payments and pensions from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

She said their dependents would receive a lifetime pension of around $2,000 (about P100,000) a month from the National Insurance Institute-Ministry of Labor in Israel.

Sto. Tomas said that apart from the immediate financial assistance package, Ruga's family also stands to get a total of P17,500 in death benefits from the OWWA, plus scholarship for one dependent.

Rebecca, childless and married to a 58-year old diabetic, decided to work as caregiver in Israel to help her elder sister save money for an open-heart surgery for Febe's four-year-old son Leonardo, who is afflicted with a congenital heart disease.

On Sept. 1 last year, Calapan Water System and Development Corp. chair Jolly Ting allotted a total of P200,000 to help the Ruga family and push for Leonardo's open-heart surgery.

Up to now, a series of tests are being conducted on the boy to prepare him for the surgery.

Since Cunanan was the main breadwinner of the family, her family and her old and sickly parents were having a hard time surviving after her death, Lagunilla said.

The family, he added, received P120,000 from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration and P50,000 from President Macapagal-Arroyo. The money, he said, was spent for Cunanan's burial.

Ziva Somech, first secretary of the head of the Israeli Embassy's consular section, was not in her office when the INQUIRER called for comments on Monday.

Zambo town under state of calamity

DIPOLOG CITY—Kabasalan town in Zamboanga Sibugay was placed under state of calamity following Sunday's four-hour fire that razed the entire commercial center.

Ricky Ledesma, media liaison officer of Gov. George Hoffer, said more than 200 business establishments, including the Rural Bank branch and its gymnasium, were destroyed.

Destruction to properties was placed at P400 million.

Mayor Freddie Chu also suspended classes in the elementary and high school levels as the town experienced power outage.

The Sangguniang Panlalawigan yesterday allocated P2 million for the fire victims. The provincial government has also distributed rice and canned goods to those displaced.

Kabasalan, created in 1963, is the oldest and the second largest in the province.

It is a second-class town, and home to the 6,000-hectare rubber plantation of Good Year Philippines. *Lullie A. Micabalo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Southern Tagalog transport group demands P1 increase in basic fare

CALAMBA CITY—About 500 members of transport groups in Southern Tagalog are demanding a P1-increase in basic fare to help them cope with oil price increases.

During a noise barrage in this city Monday afternoon, the group condemned the alleged "terrorist attack" of big oil companies on the Filipino people and appealed for the repeal of RA 8479, or the Oil Deregulation Act.

Rolando Mingo, secretary general of Southern Tagalog Region Transport Sector Organization (Starter), hit the Macapagal-Arroyo administration for allowing the continued increase of oil prices in the country.

"Since 2002, oil prices in the country increased nine times. This despite oil prices in the world market have not really increased that much. Caltex, Shell and Petron's actions are much worse than the evil-doings of terrorists and bandits," Mingo said.

Mingo said a day's earning of a driver has long been insufficient to support a decent standard of living as most of it goes to boundary, crude expenses and fines.

He also lambasted the efforts of the government in controlling pollution by passing the blame to poor transport sectors, like tricycle operators.

Starter is alarmed by the impending phase-out of two-stroke motorcycles.

"The government will only rob us of our livelihood if they insist on eradicating two-stroke motorcycles," Mingo declared.

Transport groups in the region argue that the Clean Air Act is an additional burden to their already hard-up lives. "The Clean Air Act wants the poor drivers and operators to go through emission testing while it denies the fact that big companies and factories are the major source [of] air pollution," Mingo said.

The government requires vehicle emission testing which amounts to P300 for private vehicles and P90 for public utility vehicles.

The protesters also called the attention of the local government of this city in carrying out its re-routing projects without soliciting the opinion of the local transport group.

Starter said Mayor Severino Lajara didn't bother to have a "real" public hearing before implementing the re-routing project, which the local government said would lessen the traffic problem in the city.

Starter also assailed President Macapagal-Arroyo's attempts to deviate public attention from issues such as the escalating oil prices through the 'unity government' she is currently pushing. *Marlon Ramos and Clarice Colting, Southern Luzon Bureau*

Nur followers fail to take oath

ISABELA CITY—Just because of the word "renewal," the scheduled taking of the oath of allegiance by some 300 followers of Moro leader Nur Misuari did not push through on Monday.

Col. Bonifacio Ramos, chief of the 103rd Brigade, said Moro National Liberation Front Commander Bashiri Jailani, the Basilan-based leader of more than 300 Misuari followers, backed out from the oath-taking ceremony as there "were some people questioning the use of the word 'renewal' which they mistook as surrender."

Ramos said the group earlier agreed to take the oath expressing their full support to the 1996 Peace Agreement which the MNLF signed with the government.

But Jailani said what was agreed was a "peaceful reconciliation, not renewal nor surrender."

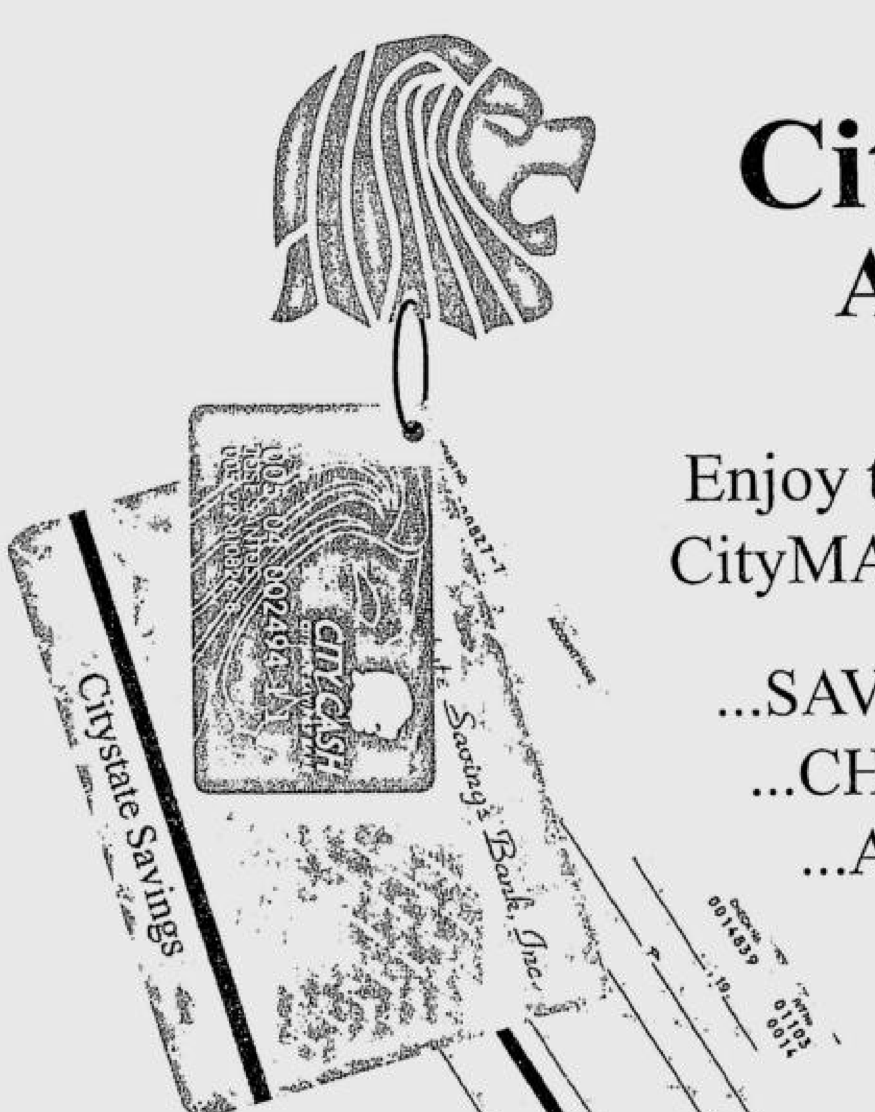
He said what prompted him to back out was a report made by the Agence France Press allegedly saying that around 300 of his men were surrendering to the government.

The 103rd Brigade on Monday prepared food and vehicles for those who were supposed to take their oath of allegiance.

"We used a justifiable amount for their supposed returning back to the mainstream," Ramos said.

For Jailani, it was not the first time he failed the government.

Late last year, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process, Sec. Eduardo Ermita, and Gov. Parouk Hussin of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao went to Basilan and waited for Jailani and his men's arrival. Ermita's group returned to Zamboanga City empty-handed. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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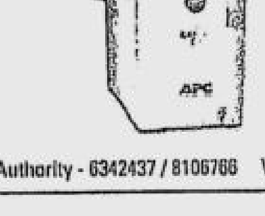

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Helping farmers, saving environment

By Gia Damaso-Dumo
Pugo, La Union

WHAT does this upland town at the border of Benguet have in common with Lobo, Batangas, and Pagudpud, Ilocos Norte? Simple. Good Roots.

Good Roots is the flagship environmental and development project of Caltex Philippines and is now on its 11th year in the country. It teaches farmers how to "reclaim their environment" through the propagation of various tree species for watershed and commercial use.

Created, and up to now still directed, by American anthropologist-author Dr. Ben J. Wallace, the project was piloted in Pagudpud in 1991 (Good Roots I) and replicated in Lobo in 1996 (Good Roots II).

Wallace started Good Roots III in Pugo in February last year to expand the benefits of the program, test new ground and become more visible to target beneficiaries.

"In the Philippines, around 200,000 hectares of land are being deforested annually . . . or at the rate of 3.3 percent since 1980. Good Roots has put together the academe, the industry and the people to help return to nature some of that which has been taken," Wallace said during the formal launching of Good Roots III on Jan. 11 at Barangay Cares.

Aside from Caltex, the project partners are the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, where Wallace is assistant provost and director, and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

"It is our way of bringing back a good environment . . . a future for our kids," seconded Marian Catedral, Caltex corporate communications manager.

Good Roots is the only Asian case study that has been included in the (mother company) Chevron Texaco documentary report compilation of community engagement in its international operating countries, she added.

Integrated farming

The project starts by convincing the community—the farming families and the landowners—about the benefits of integrated farming, specifically the propagation of trees to restore the environment as well as improve the productivity of their farms.

Later, the farmers and their families are organized and taught how to propagate different species of trees and plants that they would like to grow and to care for them as a community.

They themselves have to allocate a portion of their farm for a nursery.

At the appropriate time, and guided by scientific knowledge from the Good Roots agriculturists, they plant the trees in their farms, integrated with the early-maturing crops that they usually cultivate or just learned to cultivate.

The trees may be anything from papaya (which bears fruit in six months) and citrus (which bears fruit in three years if grafted, longer if not) to mahogany (15 years to harvest) and narra (40 years to harvest), the seeds of which Good Roots procures and provides for free.

The whole idea is known to agriculturists as integrated farming system. Although not an entirely new idea, the private sector may have been more effective than government in transferring the technology because it could afford to hire full-time staff who are focused on the project, according to La Union provincial agriculturist Amelia Sotelo.

Aside from Wallace, Good Roots has seven technical staff members, including a social scientist, and two forester-agriculturists. With over 10 years of Good Roots experience and full financial support from Caltex, they live and work full-time at the project site and are thus able to provide as much technological assistance as possible to the participating farmers.

Ideal site

Sotelo agreed that Pugo was ideal for integrated farming as conceptualized by Good Roots since it is an upland area that is highly dependent on rainfall.

"Normally, the farmers would only wait for the rains to plant early maturing crops (vegetables and root crops). With the presence of these trees, they could plant more often and maximize the use of their farms," Sotelo said.

Farmer Victor Lales, one of the first Good Roots participants, said he now had something to hope for while planting his usual cash crops since his trees would give him a windfall after many years of waiting.

In Wallace's case studies, farmers from Pagudpud and Lobo have attested not only to having a better quality of life but to observing remarkable improvements in the environment, such as diminished soil erosion and mudslides, cooler temperature, and more water from their natural sources, as well.

With barely a year of implementation, Good Roots III has involved 84 farmer-households in Barangays Cares, Maoasoas and Cuenca in Pugo. Together, they have already produced over 40,000 seedlings, including those of *rambutan, lucban, lanzones, calamansi, durian* and even watershed species such as mahogany, gmelina, eucalyptus and the native tree *tibig* (*Ficus nota*).

There are now 12,000 *tibig* seedlings (***See related story***) ready for planting, in addition to the 2,000 mahogany and eucalyptus seedlings already planted along the highway as windbreakers in July, Wallace said.

Although Good Roots does its part to restore the watershed through roadside planting, Wallace emphasized that Good Roots is neither a large-scale reforestation project ("which should be left to government agencies") nor a welfare project.

"As an institutionalized policy, welfare breeds more welfare. The (beneficiaries) must have a sense of ownership of the project, or the project is doomed to fail. What we do is give the farmers the seeds and the knowledge, but they must help themselves. Our greatest compliment would be to work ourselves out of our jobs," he said.

And if the idea indeed takes root, with the farmers continuing to be self-sufficient and the project itself sustainable, Pugo Mayor Orlando Ballóguing's prognosis may just come true: "I hope that years from now, many Pugonians will become millionaires."

DR. BEN J. Wallace (2nd from right), the American anthropologist-author and creator of Good Roots, meets with project team members in Pugo, La Union.

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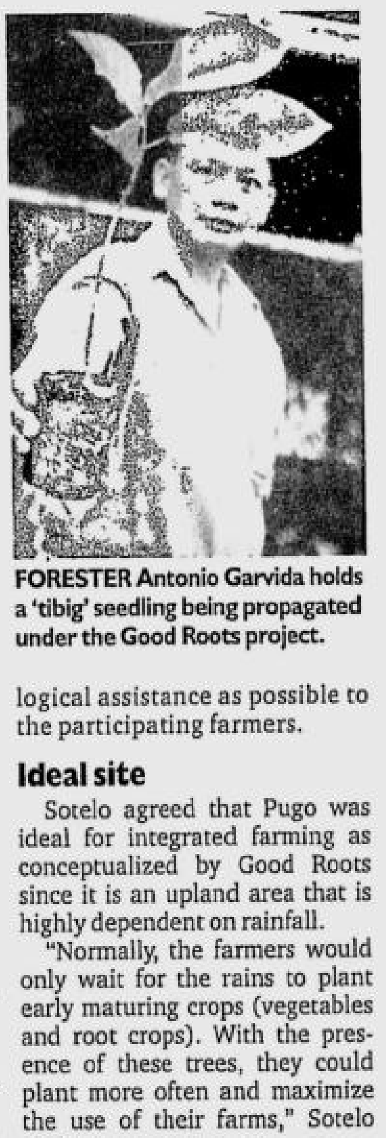
ENTRANCE to the Good Roots nursery in Pugo, La Union.



FORESTER Antonio Garvida holds a 'tibig' seedling being propagated under the Good Roots project.

A little known watershed tree

ASIDE from teaching farmers to reclaim their environment, Caltex's Good Roots project trains them to propagate multipurpose tree species and introduce new ones in their land to help improve their quality of life.

One of these species is the little known *tibig* (*Ficus nota*), which agriculturists say is an excellent variety for watershed areas.

Tibig is widely grown in the predominantly hilly and mountainous terrain of Pugo town in southeastern La Union, Dr. Ben Wallace, the project director, said.

"People experienced the scarcity of water during summer. Good Roots has now started propagating the species to satisfy their request for *tibig* in the watershed areas," said Wallace.

The tree has strong roots and a moist base. It has a fruit similar to the blackberry.

"The challenge for us now is how to propagate it from seeds, wildlings and cuttings. One of the good things about it as a watershed tree is that no one really wants to cut it down. It's not fuel wood and people don't eat it. But it has a really good root section," he said.

In Good Roots, farmer-participants choose the trees they want and need to grow in their areas.

"In Pagudpud, for example, fuel wood was very important. Farmers didn't have a lot of it. So in Pagudpud, we helped them develop fuel logs so they could grow their own fuel wood without chopping down much trees," Wallace said.

In Lobo, Batangas, the endangered Philippine teak was propagated and widely planted.

Pangasinan salt makers lament coarse side of 'asin' law

By Jo Clemente
Dasol, Pangasinan

SALT producer Leonardo Monterola is still perplexed why a sea product as natural as salt needs to be enhanced with a chemical.

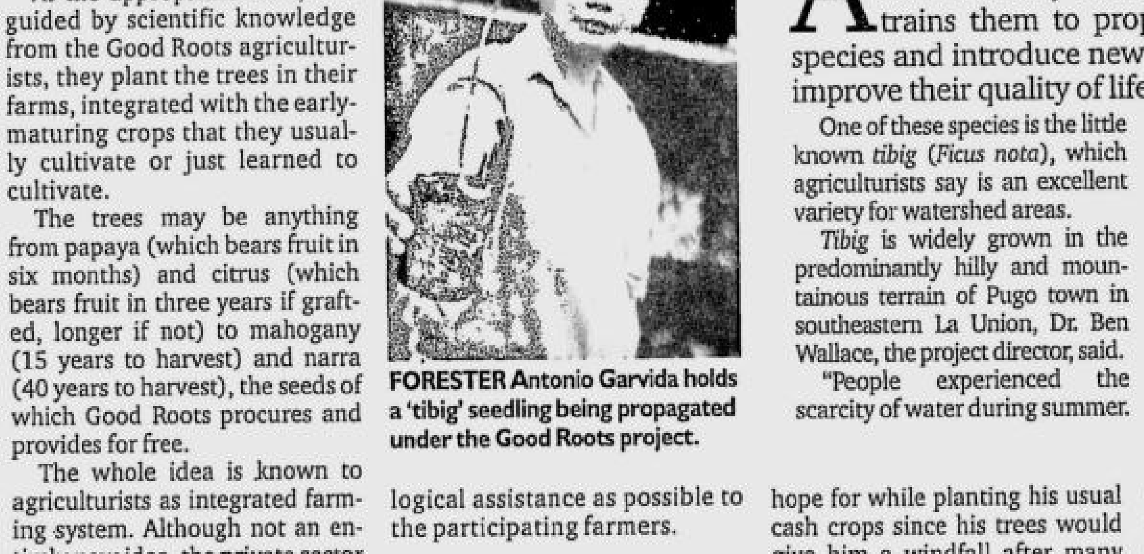
For consumers, on the other hand, what is more puzzling is a revelation that some of the salt we buy actually comes from India.

Monterola, 42, is aware though that this year, Republic Act No. 8172 (an act promoting salt iodization nationwide) will be fully implemented and every pinch of salt that gets out of his bin should be sprayed with potassium iodide.

Since the law was enacted in 1995, Monterola says they have been asked to attend sessions on how iodizing should be done. The Department of Health and the municipal government of Dasol, Pangasinan also gave them testers to determine iodine presence in their product.

Pangasinan is traditionally known as the country's major salt producer. In fact, its name says just that, "producer of salt." And to this day, those in the salt trading business still go to Pangasinan for their supply, especially market vendors, because of what they describe as quality salt—"*mas maputi, mas pino* (clearer, finer)."

Enterprising salt makers from other parts of the country, like Guimaras and Mt. Province, also go to Pangasinan to learn the craft. But today, not all salt from Pangasinan is produced in the area.



DASOL'S salt farms: A vanishing landscape. JO CLEMENTE

Iodized salt

Monterola is one of four tenants in a piece of property in Barangay Bubunot in Dasol. The property, which is owned by a former town official, is located along the national highway close enough to the Dasol Bay where seawater is siphoned into salt beds. Here, Monterola produces and trades his refined salt.

Rent is based on the number of stoves he set up. Monterola pays P1,400 a year for each of his two tray stoves. The stove is used to cook and refine salt crystals generated from the salt beds.

The salt farms are productive from November to May when seawater is distilled on brick-floored salt beds and allowed to evaporate to produce salt crystals. A bed usually produces about two *tiklis* (large woven bamboo baskets) of crystal salt a day.

"*Nag-aabangan lang kami* (We just wait)," says Monterola, describing the system in the local salt industry.

This means they just wait for whatever is generated from the salt beds and buy them. They then soak the crystals in brine to bring out impurities and cook the solution between seven and eight hours to produce refined salt.

It would take three to four *tiklis* of crystal salt to produce a sack of refined salt. Monterola says he produces five to six sacks of refined salt daily.

Each day, too, he supplies just about that much to his clients. A 50-kilogram sack of non-iodized salt sells at P180. Monterola's wife says they earn about P70 for every batch on the stove.

With RA 8172 enforced, Monterola says they have to add-on cost and stretch more to recover their actual production cost.

A kilogram of potassium iodate costs from P1,800 to P2,000. This can iodize about 200 sacks of refined salt. Monterola says they sell iodized salt at P185 a sack, but they cannot go higher because the price is regulated.

Thus, their add-on cost due to iodization will be recovered only after they have sold their 360th sack. Monterola says that will be after 60 days at the rate they are going. By that time, they have shelled out another P1,800 to sustain iodization.

Imported salt

During the rainy season when salt beds are converted to fishponds, Monterola says they have to get salt crystals elsewhere, primarily from a Metro Manila trader who brings them imported salt from India. The salt is already iodized but they have to refine it and iodize it again.

They buy the imported salt at P140 a sack, but Monterola says they need a little less of it to produce the brine they cook because the Indian salt tastes saltier.

Monterola laments that they have to use imported salt as there is not enough stock of crystal salt to sustain them during the off-season.

He appeals to the government for a "little help" or they will lose to big traders who have the resources to sustain and comply with all the requirements of RA 8172.

Vendors in at least nine public markets along the western portion of Pangasinan, from Mangatarem to Dasol, echo a similar line.

But how much refined iodized salt can P5 bring? The measure is inconsistent.

At the Sual public market, refined iodized salt is repacked in plastic bags. The P5-pack is equal to two-and-a-half cups of salt. Asked where the salt came from, a vendor said their supply came from Alaminos City.

At the Alaminos public market, a P5 pack of iodized salt is twice as much as those sold in Sual. A vendor there said Alaminos salt makers could not sell in the market because they did not produce iodized salt. Their iodized salt comes from Dasol, she said.

Salt makers in Alaminos would rather cater to the requirements of *bagoong* (fish sauce) producers.

"*Bagoong* tastes bitter if you use iodized salt. Producers don't want iodized salt because the fish they are using already contains the essential iodine," a vendor explained.

All told, there's hardly any salt in the market sold in the usual fashion of displaying the product in *bilao* and sold by *takal* (measuring cup). Having the salt repacked in plastics is an attempt to follow the law.

Still, the law is clear in saying that retailed iodized salt should be packed at food-grade standards and should be labeled to include the name and address of the source, brand name, net content and expiry date.

But none of these requirements are followed in local public markets, and much as Monterola and the market vendors would want to do this, it is way beyond their means.

Angara opts to attend Palace meet

From page A1

these events. If there's a Cabinet meeting or a Ledac meeting that's pre-scheduled, we will just follow our own schedule," Bunye said.

Bunye said Angara "contributed actively" to the discussion. The LDP chair has pledged to support the administration's legislative agenda after Ms Macapagal declared that she would not run in the 2004 presidential election. He did a Ms Macapagal when he announced on Monday that he would not run for president in 2004.

The President's economic measures include the National Transmission Co. (Transco) franchise, securitization bill, indexation of "sin taxes," rationalization of motor vehicle fees, creation of the National Authority for Revenue Administration, and use of farmlands as loan collateral.

Her other priority measures are the absentee voting and the dual citizenship bills, the proposed anti-terrorism act, a bill seeking the rationalization of compensation in the judiciary, and a bill seeking the creation of a Department of Housing.

Money laundering

At the meeting, Ms Macapagal called for amendments to the Anti-Money Laundering Law, and reminded Congress to pass the 2003 budget as soon as possible.

Bunye said the lawmakers had agreed to divide the bills into two sets; the first would be tackled from now until the Easter break, and the second would be tackled after the Easter break until the June 30 break.

"Everybody is aware that we're pressed for time to pass these bills," he said.

Present at the Ledac meeting were Senate President Franklin Drilon, Majority Leader Loren Legarda, and Senators Francis Pangilinan, Manuel Villar, Ramon Magsaysay Jr., Juan Flavier and Ralph Recto.

Also present were Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales III, and Representatives Gerry Salapudin, Emilio Espinosa, Francis Escudero, Agapito Aquino, Oscar Moreno, Jules Ledesma, Marcelino Libanan, Jose Salceda, Jaime Lopez, Robert Barbers, Alipio Bedeles, Gregorio Ipoy, Prospero Pichay and Rolando Andaya.

Senate to blame

A congressman, who was not at the meeting, said the Senate was to blame for the delay in the passage of measures needed to spur economic recovery.

Isabela Rep. Rodolfo Albano said the "squabbling" of senators had led to "interminable delays" in the passage of economic reform measures.

"The Senate must own up to the blame—it cannot point to any one else for these delays that have set back economic recovery," Albano said in a statement.

Stranded in the Senate

The statement said De Venecia reported to the Ledac meeting that the House had passed six major economic reform bills "that remain stranded in the Senate, (thus) holding up the pace of economic recovery."

De Venecia identified these as the bills on Transco franchise, securitization, Department of Housing, removal of documentary stamp taxes on secondary trading transactions, railway modernization and farmland-as-collateral bills.

"We have worked extremely hard to pass these measures. The House has done its job and we are proud of our output," De Venecia said in the statement.

The statement noted that two other landmark measures—the Special Purpose Asset Vehicle and the Government Procurement Act—had been stranded in the Senate for months. They were approved only last month.

A word war of sorts has erupted between the two chambers after Senate President Franklin Drilon said that congressmen were being irresponsible for pursuing Charter change at this time.

In the Senate, Estrada said he was open to Ms Macapagal's call for all political parties to support her administration under a common reform agenda.

"Why not, as long it will benefit the greater good or the greatest number of people," Estrada told reporters after testifying before the Senate committee on government corporation and public enterprises, which is investigating the allegedly anomalous energy contract involving the Argentine firm Industrias Metallurgicas Pescarmona, Anonima Sociedad (Impsa).

Not a sacrifice

But Estrada was quick to point out that "it was not a sacrifice on her part" when Ms Macapagal announced on Dec. 30 that she would not run in 2004.

"A so-called sacrifice (because) in all surveys, she's No. 3 or 4. That's why she's not running because she will lose, surely lose," Estrada said.

Asked to comment on Ms Macapagal's wish for the Estrada trial to be finished before June 30, 2004, the former President said he no longer cared about the trial's outcome.

"I've said, time and again, that I have lost my trust and confidence in the justice system, especially in those running it. So I don't care," he said.

Estrada said the opposition had yet to decide on who its standard bearer would be in 2004 although he had trimmed down the list to Sen. Panfilo Lacson, actor Fernando Poe Jr. and businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, San Miguel Corp. chair.

"(Cojuangco) is a potential candidate because he has proven himself. San Miguel is the only company making money now," Estrada said. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

KEEPING to her own schedule, despite the Estrada testimony at the Senate, President Macapagal convenes the Ledac at the Palace with Vice President Teofisto Guingona in attendance. EDWIN BACASMAS

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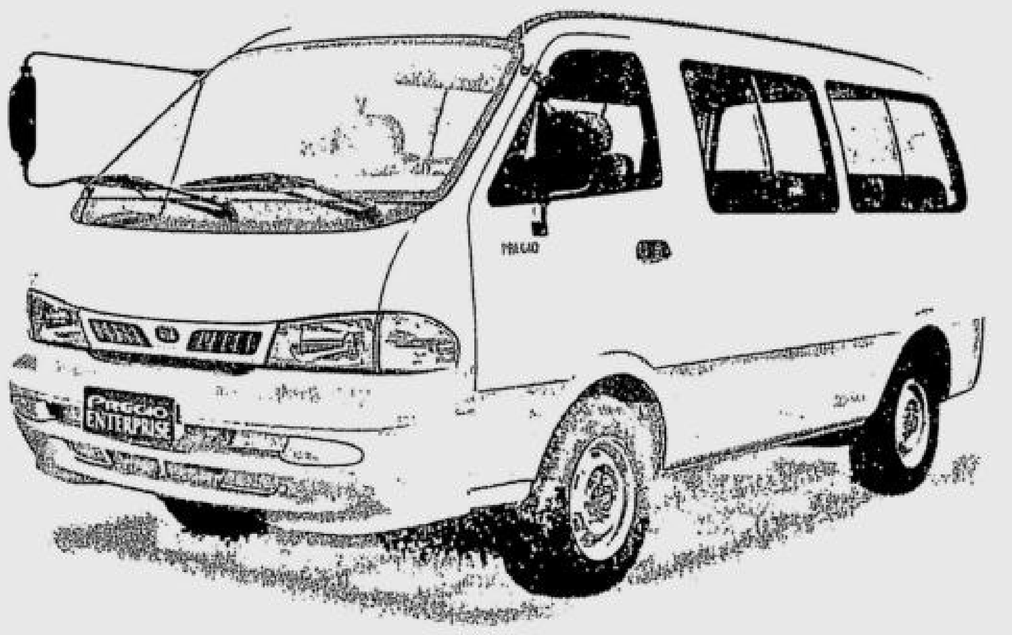

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GMA bashed in Erap show in Senate

From page A1

Jimenez's bribe try. "I was then offered a $14-million bribe," he said then. "I will tell the rest of the story once I'm allowed to testify at the Senate."

Yesterday, Sen. Robert Barbers, the lone administration member who attended the hearing of the committee on government corporations and public enterprises, asked Estrada why he did not order the arrest of Jimenez, who was brokering for the Argentine firm Industrias Metallurgicas Pescarmona SA. "Why not arrest the offeror for bribery? What action was made?" Barbers asked.

Estrada, who is under detention while facing plunder charges, replied: "That is your interpretation. I have a different interpretation because there are so many who give donations to the "Office of the President."

When he was President, Estrada came under fire for allowing his personal friends to use their private funds to renovate the presidential yacht and the Malacañang kitchen.

Estrada said that in mid-1999 Jimenez began following up documents related to Impsa's proposal to build, rehabilitate, operate and transfer four hydroelectric power plants for state-run National Power Corp.

Estrada said Jimenez told him: *"Meron ho ditong $14 million na nakareserba para sa mga project ng OP* (There's $14 million here reserved for the projects of the OP)."

To which, Estrada said he replied: *"Hindi na kailangan iyan basta walang sovereign guarantee* (That is no longer needed, as long as there is no sovereign guarantee)."

"I was not interested in receiving anything from anybody. My only interest in Impsa was to negotiate that a direct sovereign guarantee provision be avoided," he said.

A sovereign guarantee in effect binds the government to pay the obligations of the parties in case of default.

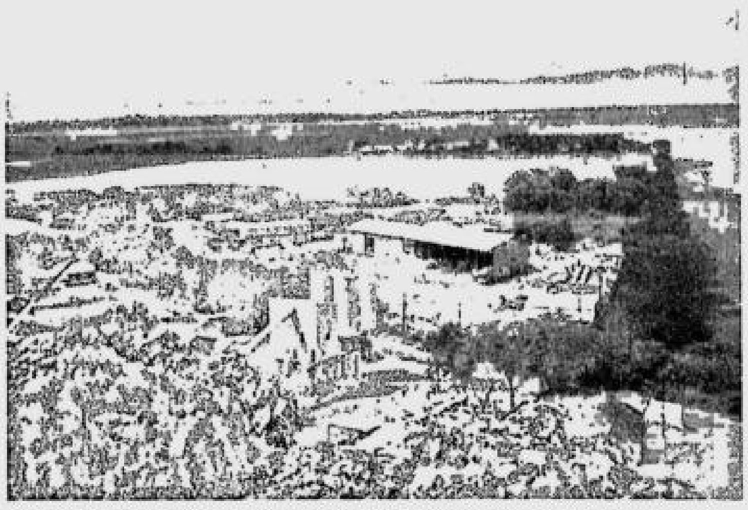
Who's to blame?

Estrada blamed other administrations, emphasizing that no government contract providing for a direct government guarantee was approved under his watch, in contrast with the administrations of former Presidents Corazon Aquino, who signed 13 contracts with independent power producers (IPPs), and Fidel Ramos, who signed 28.

He also revealed that Ramos and former Philippine Ambassador to Argentina Carlos Villa Abrille had, on separate occasions, also tried to convince him to approve the Impsa contract.

"(Ramos) said that this was a commitment of his administration to Argentine President (Carlos) Menem," said Estrada, who recalled that Ramos personally asked him to fast-track the project while they were on board a helicopter en route to a project site in Pangasinan.

In his statement, Estrada said he "respectfully and categorically states that the CBK-Impsa project, amidst all the controversies attached to it, was made effective with the (ex-Justice Secretary Hernando) Perez opinion only two days (sic) into Ms Macapagal's presidency."



THE SITE of the $450-million Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan hydropower plant at the boundary of Kalayaan and Lumban in Laguna. VAL HANDUMON

"More onerously, Perez inserted the provision that directly linked the proponents and lenders to the national government," he said.

Estrada cited a paragraph in the Jan. 24, 2001 Perez opinion which stated that "the Republic of the Philippines has validly and effectively consented to the transfer and assignment to the lenders of all of CBK's rights under the government undertaking."

"The Impsa contract was not formally and actually consummated in my two and a half years in office but it took the Macapagal-Arroyo administration only two working days to conclude the same," he said.

The ex-President, driven out of Malacañang on Jan. 20, 2001, maintained that he was not in favor of granting a direct government guarantee to the Argentine firm Impsa because "this would mean more PPA (purchased power adjustment) that our people would eventually shoulder."

In his statement before the committee chaired by Sen. John Osmena, Estrada said that "as a matter of policy, my administration did not allow the approval of any government (project which) contained a direct sovereign guarantee provision."

"The power surplus, the onerous imposition of unwarranted PPA charges on our people, our runaway foreign debt and the ballooning budget deficit are the painful and continuing effects of so many years of government contracts that provided for direct sovereign guarantee," Estrada told the committee.

Lacson's breakdown

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson used the hearing to air his charges again that the $14-million bribe was actually paid, but after the Macapagal administration came to power.

Saying that he had no idea how the money was distributed, however, Estrada returned the question to Lacson, who had served as his Philippine National Police chief from November 1999 to January 2001: "Why, were you able to trace it?"

Lacson then said that Jimenez had told him that "$2 million was given to Perez, $4 million to Malacañang, $1 million 'for the boys' and the $7 million (Jimenez) did not mention anymore."

Lacson also gave details on the Coutts Bank account to which the $2 million for Perez was allegedly transferred.

A press statement from Lacson's office said it was the first time that details of the $14-million alleged bribe were revealed in public.

In the statement, Lacson wondered why the Palace had yet to investigate the bribe.

"I am wondering why there is no effort on the part of Malacañang to investigate the matter, since the President has been furnished copies of the evidence several months ago."

Estrada told the committee that a "mutual friend" tried to ask his help to ask Lacson not to expose the $2-million payoff from Jimenez.

Jimenez has denied that the alleged $2-million payoff to Perez had anything to do with Impsa.

Missing senators

Conspicuously absent from the hearing was Estrada ally Sen. Edgardo Angara, who had served as agriculture secretary and executive secretary under his administration.

Angara attended the Legislative-Executive Development Advisory Council (Ledac) meeting in Malacañang on invitation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Except for Barbers, no other administration senator was present at the hearing.

Even Sen. Joker Arroyo, chair of the Senate blue ribbon committee which is conducting the probe jointly with Osmeña's committee, was a no-show.

He explained why to reporters later in the afternoon. "I do not believe that Presidents, after they step down, can be summoned in any (Senate) inquiry. I base this on constitutional grounds," Arroyo said.

With this practice, "Presidents would be very wary and careful of what they are doing, fearing that they could be summoned (by the Senate) in the future." ***With reports from AFP, Reuters***

'Eraptions' at Senate: 'Subpoena me every day'

From page A1

again. It's been two years since I've been here," Estrada told the Inquirer on the phone, with the lively chatter of his guests in the background.

Among those who came "to give me moral support," he said, were some members of his Cabinet, Ejercito's civic group Mare, as well as the group of women regularly seen attending his plunder trial at the Sandiganbayan.

One of these women, Amparo Guballa of Quezon City, savored the fragrance that rubbed off on her palm after sneaking a handshake with Estrada on his way out of the Senate conference room.

"His hand smells so sweet," she said, almost with a girlish giggle.

"It looks as if he's still the President," Senate information officer Sylvia Arboleda couldn't help but say as she noted the security preparations and overall frenzy stirred by Estrada's arrival.

For the duration of their idol's testimony, some 200 pro-Estrada supporters gathered by the People's Movement Against Poverty staged a relatively peaceful rally at the approach to the Senate complex, which some 300 policemen helped secure.

Foes too

But it was only his friends who tailed Estrada to the Senate.

Dr. Carol Araullo of Plunderwatch, who sat in the audience, said the ex-President was "just out to show that the Macapagal administration has no moral high ground to judge him."

"What came out clear is that this Impsa scam has the fingerprints of three administrations (Ramos, Estrada and Macapagal)," she said in an interview. "There were many who benefitted from it along the way."

Plunderwatch, she said, considers yesterday's episode as "part of a power play" connected to the Estrada camp's lingering clamor to have him placed under house arrest.

"Since the house arrest petition remains on appeal, (the Estrada camp) may just keep pounding on this issue until something in the Macapagal administration gives way," Araullo added.

In the Inquirer interview, Estrada lashed out at the series of newspaper ads which he suspected to have been financed by Malacañang to show that he signed various documents approving the Impsa deal.

"They are spending millions to fool the public," he said. "They're just afraid of the truth."

He also found the conspicuous absence of the administration senators in the Impsa hearing to be "obviously deliberate."

In a brief press conference after the hearing, Estrada also aired his desire to see his co-accused son Jinggoy and erstwhile private lawyer Edward Serapio finally allowed to post bail by the Sandiganbayan court hearing their 21-month-old plunder case.

No sacrifice

Asked to comment on Ms Macapagal's Dec. 30 announcement that she's no longer seeking a second term in 2004, Estrada said: "I don't think it's a sacrifice on her part," suggesting that she gave up her reelection bid mainly because of her poor ratings in recent opinion polls.

Judging by yesterday's turnout, the former movie star still commands the loyalty of devoted fans.

Although much smaller in numbers these days, Estrada's mostly impoverished followers still turn out for his now-rare public appearances—an echo of his once-immense popularity and a reminder of the blind patronage that has long afflicted the country's highly personalized politics.

"I've only seen him on TV; today I may have a chance to give him a tight hug," said Maria Morante, a 39-year-old mother of five who said she started idolizing Estrada as a fast-punching defender of the poor in films in the 1980s. She was was dressed in bright orange, Estrada's favorite color.

Taxi driver Felix Madale acknowledged Estrada's foibles—philandering and heavy drinking—but said he was ready to argue all day with anyone accusing his "President" of corruption and misrule.

"Let's say that he was a womanizer, but he didn't neglect the country and the poor. He cared for us," Madale said, puffing a cigarette.

"Why do we love Erap and not Gloria? Because he's for us and Gloria is for the elite," Madale said. "We have two presidents and mine is Erap."

Thinner, paler

During his testimony, Estrada's former Senate colleagues couldn't help but notice how much weight he had lost. Estrada ally Sen. Vicente Sotto asked why he looked pale.

"Thank you for your concern," Estrada said. "But they don't allow me to go out my hospital room and I'm not able to be under the sun. I hope you'll subpoena me everyday, some more, so I could enjoy the sunshine."

Opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel asked him: "How is you knee?"

Estrada cited his recent visit to the "healing nun" Sister Gloria as having had helped him a lot.

"I don't drink pain killers (for my knee) anymore and I need not go to my doctors often," Estrada said.

But he did note that the "only remedy" for his ailing knee was a medical operation that he would have to go through in the United States.

"(But) I cannot go abroad," he said.

Estrada seized the opportunity to rib the Macapagal administration for blocking his trip to the United States for a knee operation.

"I have no intention of leaving the country (permanently) or escaping," he said.

Estrada pointed out that he could have done so as early as the first few days of the Macapagal administration when he was twice offered the opportunity to leave.

"These (offers) were made at the house of Chito Madrigal-Collantes twice. I was offered to leave first but I should resign. Then the second, to leave through the back door," he told the committee.

He also brushed aside a senator's question if he preferred to be put on house arrest instead of being detained at the VMMC.

"There is no difference between hospital or house arrest," he said.

But Estrada did make a pitch in favor of his son, former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada, and lawyer Ed Serapio, former corporate secretary of the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation (EMYF).

"Never mind me. Just my son and Attorney Serapio," he said. ***With a report from AP***

China opens door to RP teachers, maids

From page A1

to POEA Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz.

Baldoz said the POEA and the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Hong Kong were still negotiating with Chinese employment agencies concerning wages and benefits for foreign workers.

Baldoz said China was offering teachers a net take-home pay of only $268 a month, lower than the wages of domestic helpers of foreign expatriates.

"It's too low. There are many fees and deductions from the basic pay," Baldoz said in a phone interview. She noted the deployment of Filipino teachers to a Dominican school in Taiwan whose requirements were the same as those of China. The Taiwanese employers, however, offer better wages.

Fees for visas and licenses represent a big part of the deductions, according to Baldoz. The salaries are also taxable.

The POEA has asked the Philippine Embassy in Beijing to confirm if the fees and deductions are in accordance with the labor and immigration laws of China.

Bernard Julve, labor attaché to Hong Kong, has been scouting for job opportunities in Guangdong, a province of China near Hong Kong.

Julve reported that China was "open" to the hiring of domestic helpers as long as they remained under the employment of expatriates.

The first 20 overseas Filipino workers will be deployed to China as maids of expatriates based in Shenzhen, China's richest economic zone. Their papers were processed in Hong Kong, not in the Philippines.

The maids will start work next month for about 3,000 yuan (US$362) a month, the Ta Kung Pao newspaper reported in Hong Kong on Monday. The salary is lower than Hong Kong's minimum monthly salary of 3,670 Hong Kong dollars (US$470) for domestic workers—thousands of whom have demonstrated against proposals to tax their earnings.

Having a foreign maid is not unheard of in China, where some expatriate families have arranged privately to bring them in.

Baldoz said only one recruitment agency so far had sought accreditation to deploy Filipino workers in China. ***With a report from AP***

Malacañang downplays Senate quiz

From page A1

But the official indifference was belied by the presence, for the second straight day, of Energy Secretary Vince Perez and Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez at the regular Palace news briefing.

Perez, Gutierrez and Bunye all denied Estrada's claim that the Macapagal administration had agreed to shoulder Impsa's loans in case of default through the legal opinion issued by ex-Justice Secretary Hernando Perez and dated Jan. 24, 2001.

"There's no (direct government) guarantee and whoever says there is a guarantee is just making up a story," Bunye insisted.

"It's very dangerous to read the mind of the former President because his mind works in strange ways," he replied, when asked why Estrada believed that the DOJ opinion "inserted" a provision for a government guarantee.

Bunye said the more important thing was for the former President to explain the alleged $14-million bribery of Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

"The former President knew it was a crime to make an offer to the Chief Executive and yet he didn't do anything and he even made Mark Jimenez his presidential (adviser) on Latin affairs. He even called Mark Jimenez a financial genius.

"Something must be wrong with the former President (because after) having been offered a bribe you call the alleged briber a financial genius," Bunye went on.

Grandstanding Ping

Bunye also dismissed as mere "grandstanding" Sen. Panfilo Lacson's claim that $4 million of the alleged bribe went to Malacañang.

"Obviously the senator is grandstanding, trying to get media mileage out of this event," Bunye said.

Perez said Estrada must have been misled by his advisers since "nothing new (has) been included (in the DOJ opinion of Perez)."

To prove that Impsa failed to get a guarantee from the Philippine government, Perez said the Argentine firm unsuccessfully tried to get one through the help of a Japanese ministry.

He said Estrada's finance secretary, Jose Pardo, even participated in the discussions held sometime from March to June 2000.

Gutierrez said her former boss' legal opinion merely upheld the Government Acknowledgment and Consent Agreement (Gaca) issued by the Department of Finance under the previous administration.

She said the DOJ opinion explicitly stated that it should not be construed as a government guarantee.

But she admitted that the DOJ opinion did not make a judgment on the actual provisions of the contract.

A dud

In the House, Deputy Speaker Raul Gonzalez dismissed the Estrada testimony with a single word. It was a "dud," he said, as he also dismissed Lacson's breakdown of the alleged $14-million Impsa bribe as mere hearsay.

"That is all hearsay, it has no value," Gonzalez said of Lacson's revelations that the senator acknowledged was disclosed to him by Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez.

He said the revelations of Lacson would only be damaging to the Macapagal administration if people believe in hearsay.

"Otherwise, (its not damaging)," he said in an interview.

But Gonzalez wondered why Lacson did not reveal these things when Jimenez, who is now detained in a US jail after he was extradited last month, was still in the country so that the latter could have corroborated it.

Lacson has taken the Senate for a ride, he said.

Minority Leader Carlos Padilla said he believed Lacson's statement was damaging to the administration, but he noted that the Senate should pursue the matter further.

"We should not rely on just what Jimenez said," Padilla said in a separate interview. "We want the truth to come out."

A Lakas congressman also took up the cudgels for Malacañang, belying Lacson's statement that $4 million of the alleged $14-million bribe from Impsa went to Malacañang.

"I cannot imagine why certain senators can concoct a $14-million bribery scenario when it is just an illusion because it never happened," Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay said in a statement.

Pichay, along with Bulacan Rep. Willie Villarama, accompanied Manila Rep. Mark Jimenez to the United States. Pichay said that before they left for Miami on Dec. 16, he specifically asked Jimenez about rumors that a $14-million bribe was given to the Macapagal administration by Impsa.

"He confided to me that there is no such thing as $14 million," said Pichay.

"Mark Jimenez said time and again that he never acted as an agent for Impsa and that he did not offer to bribe the former President. If this is so, then the allegations of Senator Lacson are unfounded," Pichay said.

Perez's denial

Perez maintained yesterday that he did not grant a sovereign guarantee to the controversial Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan (CBK) project.

He insisted that it was jailed President Joseph Estrada who had fully approved the power deal awarded to Impsa.

Perez said during an ambush interview at Pan Pacific Hotel in Malate, Manila, that it was wrong to infer that his signature could supersede the signature of Estrada.

"The legal opinion did not create the contract. The (power deal contract) is already there," he added.

What he did when he assumed his post was to render an opinion on the "government undertaking," or the Gaca.

"That government undertaking is not even a sovereign guarantee during the Estrada administration or the Arroyo administration," said Perez.

He pointed out that a sovereign guarantee could not be contained in a mere opinion. "There has to be a separate document wherein the guarantee appears and the opinion will only state whether it is legal or not," he said.

As to the waiver of the immunity from suit granted by Gaca to Impsa, he said: "Actually, it is basic principle in law that when the government enters into a contract it waives immunity from suit. This portion may not even be stated because it is automatic."

Also, he said the provision on the waiver of immunity and the other provisions in his opinion "is a mere reiteration from the (then Justice Secretary Artemio) Tuquero opinion."

"What was consented to was the Gaca. The opinion was limited to Gaca," he said, "not any sovereign guarantee" or the legality of the Impsa contracts. ***With reports from Michael Lim Ubac, Christine Avendaño and Juliet Javellana***

The People Deserve to Know the WHOLE Truth

HERE'S THE REAL SCORE

The Concession Agreements between the Philippine Government and PIATCO have, over the past five years, been repeatedly REVIEWED, SCRUTINIZED and APPROVED by the Government's executive, legislative, legal and investigative authorities.

We find nothing in the foregoing which states that government shall assume responsibility for the payment of debt directly incurred by PIATCO in case of loan default. We note that the obligation of government is to pay PIATCO not the lenders. The situation envisioned in the subject section does not fall within the definition of "direct government guarantee".

Senate Committee on Constitutional Amendments,
Revision of Codes and Laws
Hon. Edgardo Angara, Chairman

*Assuming **ex gratia argumenti** that there may be some provisions in the Concession Agreement, which if applied, will become onerous or burdensome to the government, records likewise show that the GRP had already derived benefits from them, specific example of which is the payment by PIATCO of the Annual Guaranteed Payment due during the construction period. It was held in specific cases that "acceptance and retention of benefits flowing therefrom...extinguishes the action to annul the agreement" [Tan Ah Chan vs. Gonzales,52 Phil. 180].*

Office of the Government Corporate Counsel
Amado D. Valdez, GCC

We found no trace of anomaly or irregularity in the pre-qualification, bidding and awarding of the Concession Agreement to the Consortium. All the procedures and guidelines set forth in the BOT Law and its Implementing Rules and Regulations were followed by the PBAC... this Office repeatedly ruled that the award of the project to the Consortium was above board as it was done in accordance with law, that it shall not result in any disadvantage to the government and that there is no evidence to prove that the respondents conspired with each other to violate the laws for the award of the project to the Consortium.

Office of the Ombudsman
October 2002

The charge of violation of Section3(g) of the Anti-Graft Law against the respondents should be dismissed, the complainant having failed to prove that the subject Amended and Restated Concession Agreement entered into by and between DOTC-MIAA and PIATCO was manifestly and grossly disadvantageous to the government. What is evinced by the record ...is the contrary...that the assailed concession agreement is advantageous to the government.

Office of the Ombudsman
September 2000

What has to be settled herein is whether or not this constitutes a monopoly in the light of the BOT Law. The Committee does not believe so. Since a private investor risks his money to build said facilities, the BOT Law has allowed the private investor to recover by granting him a franchise to provide the services appropriately needed in an international passenger terminal as provided in Section 5 of the BOT Law, which states that "... the winning project proponent shall be automatically granted by the appropriate agency the franchise to operate and maintain the facility, including the collection of tolls, fees, rentals and charges..."

House Committee on Transportation and Communications
Twelfth Congress
Hon.Jacinto V. Paras, Chairman

The Committee does not find any violation of the Constitution in the execution of the ARCA and its supplements. Examining the provisions of the Constitution, the BOT Law and its Implementing Rules and Regulations, the Committee does not find any provision thereof which are violative of the Constitution and of existing laws.

House Committee on Good Government
Twelfth Congress
Hon. Ruy Elias Lopez, Chairman

Even so, the operations of NAIA IPT 3 should lead to creation of jobs, more than those that may be abolished, due to the fact that it will have a bigger capacity than the existing terminal and, therefore, more extensive operations. Furthermore, MIAA employees, whether on casual or permanent status, are not prevented by the Concession Agreement from applying for employment with PIATCO. There is a safety net contained in Section 5.18 of the Concession Agreement, which directs PIATCO to give preference to qualified MIAA employees in the hiring of employees.

House Committee on Transportation and Communications
Eleventh Congress
Hon. Rodolfo T. Tuazon, Chairman

Based on the NEDA secretariat review, all three supplements are consistent with the original concession agreement as well as with the amended and restated agreement... which are advantageous to the government.

Secretary Dante Canlas
NEDA Director-General
6 May 2002

The ICC...approved the BOT contract for NAIA International Passenger Terminal 3 project.

Felipe M. Medalla
ICC Co-Chairman

Listen to those who have bravely upheld the truth!
Let the diligent planter justly harvest the fruits of his labor.

PIATCO ANG NAGSAING, BAKIT SA IBA INIHAHAIN?

SAVE THE NAIA 3 COALITION

PAID ADVT.

SIX DIGIT
5 1 4 5 9 0
(In exact order)

SUERTRES
9 9 5

6/42 Luzon
10 16 19 36 37 41

Vis-Min
5 10 13 27 28 30

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BASKETBALL: NBA - Milwaukee vs Atlanta, 9 a.m. (r - 10 p.m.), Solar Sports
TENNIS: Best of Wimbledon 2002, 9 a.m. and 10 p.m. (r), Star Sports
Hopman Cup XV, 1 p.m. (r), Star Sports
Australian Open, Solar Sports, 2 p.m.
POOL: World Pool League 2002, 11 a.m. (r), ESPN

2ND OVERALL PICK

Kings offer ₱6.5-M deal to Adducul

By June Navarro

ROMMEL Adducul, this year's PBA Draft second overall pick, wants a longer pact far more lengthy than the one offered by Barangay Ginebra.

The Kings tendered an offer good for three years similar to the longevity of top pick Mike Cortez's contract with the Alaska Aces.

"But a longer contract with Barangay Ginebra, like say five years, is more enticing since it will provide Rommel the stability he needs as basketball player," said player-agent Ed Ponceja, manager of the 6-foot-6 Adducul.

Ponceja declined to reveal the figures involved but sources inside the Barangay Ginebra camp bared that the former San Sebastian College stalwart would receive a monthly pay check of P150,000 in his first year.

A 20-percent increase in the succeeding years awaits Adducul, who will receive an estimated monthly salary of P180,000 in 2004 and P216,000 in 2005 for a total financial package of P6.5 million, exclusive of perks and bonuses.

The offer is a far cry from the lucrative deal he had during his heydays in the now-defunct MBA but Adducul couldn't care less. The 2001 MBA MVP just wants to fulfill a long-time dream.

"I waited long enough to play in the PBA and I'm very excited about it," said the 26-year-old Adducul in Tagalog.

Adducul applied in the rookie draft last year only to beg off at the last minute after his mother team in the MBA, the Batangas Blades, refused to release him.

The addition of Adducul will pave a tougher and meaner roster for the Kings, whose frontline boasts of the 6-foot-6 Eric Menk, 6-foot-9 James Walkvist and 6-foot-5 Jun Limpot.

Meanwhile, Bal David and Banjo Calpito are set to sign fresh two-year contracts with the Kings, according to player agent-manager Danny Espiritu.

Espiritu said David and Calpito will both have lesser pays due to the prevailing economic crisis in the country and the quick turnover of players in the PBA.

High school chess meet starts Feb. 7

THE FIRST High School Chess Team Open tournament fires off at 4 p.m. on Feb. 7 at the multipurpose gymnasium of the Philippine Science High School (PSHS), Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City.

A half-day chess workshop for principals, P.E. coordinators, coaches and team captains of participating schools will be conducted by Grandmaster Eugene Torre starting at 1 p.m. on Feb. 6 at the auditorium of the Advance Science and Technology Building of the PSHS.

The chess activities are a joint project of the Grandmaster Eugenio Torre Chess Institute (GETCI), PSHS Parents and Teachers Association (Batch 06) and the Active Chess Center of Asia Inc. (ACCA).

Acknowledging the role of chess in the development of the analytical mind, Dr. Rafael Saldaña, newly-installed campus director of the PSHS, welcomes the organization of these chess events, which support and enhance his mission for the school that is "to provide the best education to mathematically and scientifically-gifted Filipino youth, and to prepare them to become future leaders of the country, particularly in the field of science and technology."

Registration for the tournament is being accepted at the ACCA secretariat, 8th Floor PDCP Bank Centre, Leviste corner Rufino Sts., Salcedo Village, Makati City with tel. nos. 892-8759 and 892-9091 (ask for Saniata Lachica or Robert Suelo Jr.) or e-mail: acca@info.com.ph

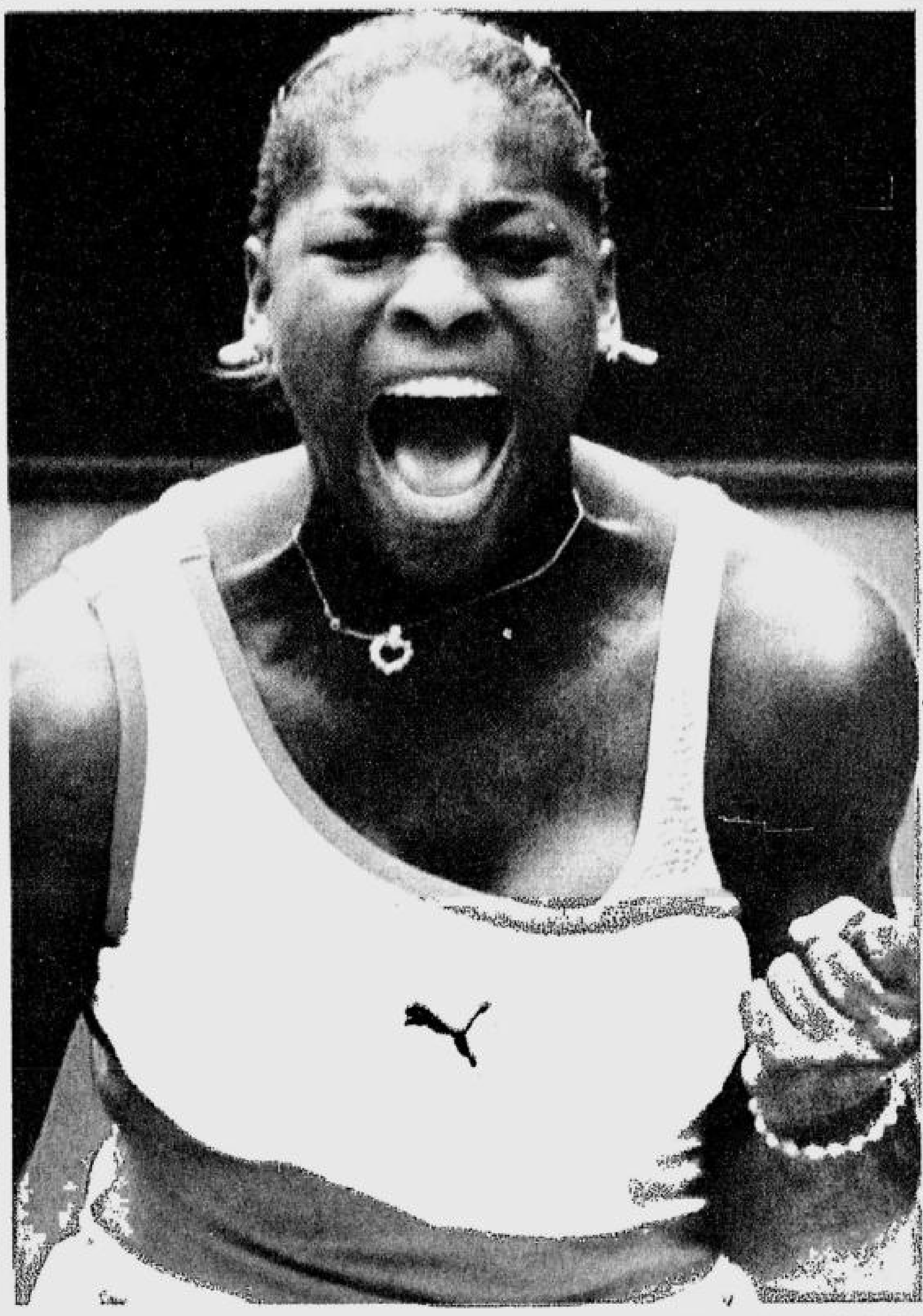
Non-master tourney set

THE METROPOLITAN Chess Club non-master 2000 and below category chess tournament will be held on Jan. 26 at the MCC new headquarter located at the 4/F of J&F Divino Bldg., along Aurora Blvd. in Quirino District, Quezon City.

The 7-round Swiss one-day event is open to all untitled chessplayers-amateurs, beginners, unrated and rated players whose rating is not over 2000.

At stake is a total pot of P10,000 with the champion getting the lion's share of P4,000 while the second, third and fourth placers will receive P2,000, P1,000 and P700 respectively. A consolation award of P500 each awaits the top performers in the following categories: 1900 below; unrated; kiddies (under-12) and juniors (under-18).

For more details, please call MCC at 826-8560; 0916-852-1069 and 0918-939-3072.



SERENA Williams yells after winning a point against Emilie Loit of France. Williams defeated Loit, 3-6, 7-6, 7-5.
REUTERS

Serena, Lleyton survive scare

MELBOURNE, Australia—Serena Williams huffed and she cussed in a stuttering start to her bid for a fourth consecutive tennis major.

The world No. 1 didn't play like the most dominant woman in tennis, dropping the first set on Tuesday against the 56th-ranked Loit and scraping through a tiebreaker in the second before edging the Frenchwoman 3-6, 7-6 (5), 7-5 on the third match point.

Men's No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt was stretched to five sets and also let off steam, arguing close line calls throughout his 6-3, 3-6, 6-1, 6-7 (3), 6-2 win over Swedish qualifier Magnus Larsson, who was in his 11th consecutive Australian Open.

In the fourth set, Larsson pounded Hewitt with a string of unplayable forehands, frustrating the young Australian, forcing errors and winning it — with his 18th forehand winner — in a tiebreaker.

No Australian has won the Grand Slam on home soil since 1976 and Hewitt has never gone beyond the fourth round. He was bundled out in the first round last year, suffering with chickenpox.

Kim Clijsters, seeded fourth and a strong chance for the Australian title after beating both Williams to win the season-ending WTA championships last November, opened with a 6-2, 6-1 win over American Samantha Reeves.

In other women's matches, No. 10 Chanda Rubin overcame Hungarian Melinda Czink 6-4, 7-5; Mary Pierce, winner of the 1995 Australian Open and 2000 French Open, advanced and American Amy Frazier, playing in her 56th Grand Slam tournament, ousted Spain's Conchita Martinez Granados.

Facing a Frenchman for the first time since clinching the deciding match of the Davis Cup final in Paris last month, Russian Mikhail Youzhny dropped a set before winning 3-6, 6-0, 6-1, 6-4 over junior world champion Richard Gasquet.

Fellow Russian Marat Safin, seeded third and a runner-up here last year, recovered from shoulder problems that sidelined him last week and beat Dutchman Raemon Sluiter in four sets. *AP*

Cortez excited over ₱8.7-M Alaska pact

By June Navarro

BARRING any major hitch, top rookie pick and La Salle star point guard Mike Cortez is all set to seal his three-year, P8.7-million deal with the Alaska Aces today.

"It's pretty good and I'm very excited about it," said the 22-year-old Cortez on the eve of his formal entry into the Aces' roster.

Alaska team manager Joaqui Trillo said Cortez, who grew up in San Jose, California, would sign the contract at 9:30 in the morning at the Alaska offices.

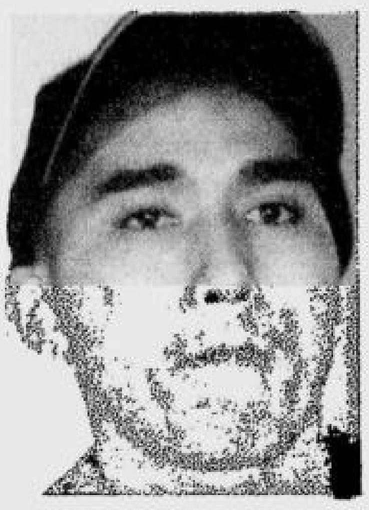
"I see no problem with the contract of Cortez. It's definitely a done deal," said Trillo.

Trillo said Rob Duat and Jon Ordonio would also formalize their contracts with the Aces.

The never-say-die Duat was offered a two-year pact worth P6.6 million while Ordonio got one-year deal that will pay the playmaker P120,000 a month.

Cortez, who piloted the Green Archers to two UAAP titles (2000-2001), will join Alaska's practice in the afternoon today at the Moro Lorenzo Gym.

His inclusion into the lineup of Alaska will definitely fill its void for a legitimate point guard, something the Aces have not experienced since they traded ace playmaker Johnny Abarrientos to Pop Cola in 2001.



CORTEZ

Trillo said that except for Cortez, Alaska's drafted rookies will have to show their worth in practice before the Aces management entertains any thoughts of signing them up.

The Aces have until Friday to dangle offer sheets to Fil-Americans Brandon Lee Cablay, Eugene Tejada and Sunny Margate and Stephen Padilla. If not, these players will automatically become free agents.

NBN-4 secures 'LC'

By June Navarro

FINALLY, NBN-4 has come up with the letter of credit which will guarantee payment for the television coverage of the 2003 PBA season.

NBN general manager Joey Isabelo yesterday said the government station had finally gotten hold of the LC and will meet today's deadline set by the PBA Board of Governors for NBN to produce the said bank guarantee.

"We will present the LC within the day and we're confident that there will no more problems standing on the way," Isabelo told the INQUIRER.

The LC, which NBN-4 secured from Manila Bank, will pave the way for the signing of a contract that will formally bind the government station to the PBA over the next three years.

Isabelo said the LC has a monetary value of P200 million, the amount NBN-4 has to shell out during the first year of its three-year, P670-million agreement with the PBA.

"All is set for this year's television coverage of the PBA. The technical and production side of the coverage is more than ready to take off," said Isabelo.

PBA Commissioner Noli Eala, however, said the league has prepared some alternatives should NBN-4 again fail to comply with the LC.

EALA

"The PBA is ready. If NBN doesn't comply, we will act swiftly to correct the problem," said Eala.

NBN-4 found itself in a quandary a few weeks back when it failed to produce the LC for the third time. NBN officials lobbied for another extension before Christmas and the PBA Board of Governors granted the request by giving the station until today to make good its promise.

Meanwhile, the start of the 2003 PBA season was moved a week later from Feb. 16 to Feb. 23 to give the league and the teams additional time to prepare for the coming season.

Jordan on All Star: It's time to step aside

WASHINGTON—If the NBA and its fans want to see Michael Jordan at the All-Star game, it's going to take some convincing.

Jordan, who has averaged a record 21.3 points per game in the All-Star game, prefers to have the time off if he's not elected to start in the Feb. 9 game at Atlanta.

"I'm not going to campaign for it," Jordan said. "It's great. It is good to represent the fans and if I get a chance to do that I will do that. But if I don't there will be no remorse, no ill feelings, no animosity none of that. I'll enjoy my week. I'm pretty sure I can find a warm climate somewhere."

All-Star voting ended Sunday and in the latest available totals Jordan was third among Eastern Conference guards behind Orlando's Tracy McGrady and Philadelphia's Allen Iverson.

Jordan, a 12-time All-Star starter, has averaged 17.6 points per game this season for the Washington Wizards and has been a big reason for the team's climb to sixth place in the Eastern Conference. But Jordan says that it is time for the younger players to get their chance.

"Things are changing. Players are changing. And (with) new generations coming in fans want to see new players in new situations. That doesn't bother me at all," Jordan said. "I welcome that because I think that's how the league is going to survive. It's a different era, and it's time for me to step aside and let some of these kids move in, and that doesn't bother me not one bit — free up my time a little bit more."

NBA results:
Detroit 101, Orlando 86; Minnesota 89, Denver 75; Houston 101, Boston 92; Chicago 101, New York 94; Portland 118, Cleveland 94; Memphis 110, Golden State 108. *AP*

JORDAN

Bucks face Hawks today

THE MILWAUKEE Bucks and Atlanta Hawks, two teams fighting desperately to clinch the eighth and final playoffs spot in the NBA Eastern Conference, face each other today (Wednesday, Jan. 15) live on Solar Sports at 9 a.m., with a replay at 10 p.m.

With a third of the NBA season over, the Bucks and Hawks sit precariously on the ninth and 10th places, respectively, in the East, just out of the Magic Eight that will qualify for the NBA Playoffs. Both teams have won their last two games and are revving up to make a run at the postseason. And both teams know that only one of them, if at all, can make it to the playoffs.

There is also a bit of off-court controversy that adds color to this game, particularly between Milwaukee's Ray Allen and former Bucks teammate Glenn Robinson, who was traded to the Hawks for Toni Kukoç before this season began.

Allen said Robinson was "a lazy ball-hog" while Robinson countered by calling Allen a "coward." Now, the two former NBA All-Stars get to settle the matter on the hardcourt.

Father and son

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

AMATEUR boxing may be down, but it's not out, that's for sure.

Despite some failures, including a lean victory of one silver medal in the Busan Asian Games and the unexpected pullout of major supporter Caltex (Phils.) last year, tireless Manny Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, is not disheartened and about to throw in the towel.

As a matter of fact, Lopez said the association enjoyed a fruitful season in 2002, citing in particular the bountiful harvest of six golds, eight silvers and six bronzes from seven international competitions Filipino boxers took part, not counting the silver medal won by promising Harry Tanamor in the Busan Asiad.

``The Abap is looking forward to reaping more honors this year," added Lopez, who was recently elected secretary general of the influential Federation of Asian Amateur Boxing (Faab). ``We salute our boxers and coaches for a job well done, hoping that they will perform better in 2003 despite the loss of our main benefactor. *Maraming sakripisyo na ang ginawa nila."*

Lopez also said the Abap is dead serious in winning the country's first ever Olympic gold by continuing a massive grassroots development program together with his father, former Philippine Sports Commission chair and Manila Mayor Mel Lopez.

The elder Lopez, who once served as boxing association president, said, ``We have a lot of young talents waiting to be tapped and harnessed, that's why we are conducting boxing lessons nationwide."

ASIAN MEET

Arroyo offered to head trackfest

By Marc Anthony Reyes

FIRST Gentleman Mike Arroyo is being offered the chairmanship of the Asian track and field championships organizing committee slated Sept. 18-24 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Athletics chief Go Teng Kok said the 44-nation event, which will showcase world-class athletic superpowers like China, Korea and Japan, is already gaining support from various sectors including Arroyo, who has been very supportive of Philippine sports.

This early, the Philippine Amateur Track and Field Association has already held talks with the Department of Tourism which aims to make the Asian championships not only a sporting event but ``a vehicle to promote tourism in the country."

DOT Assistant Secretary Rolando Reyes confirmed the department's support to the tournament, which the country will host for only the third time. It was inaugurated at the Marikina Sports Complex in 1973 and was again held here in 1993 at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

Go said he will meet with Arroyo to formally make the offer which he said is only fitting ``considering the government's thrust to prove to the world how safe and secure our country is amid threat of global terrorism."

More than 1,000 athletes and officials are due to the country for the championships which could be a dry-run for the Philippines' hosting of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain started drumming up the country's hosting last year when he released P20-million to pay the hosting bond during the Sri Lanka edition of the championships.

Middle-east countries like Qatar and Saudi Arabia and the former Soviet republics are also expected to compete.

Though competition will be stiff, Go said Filipino tracksters won't be mere spectators in the event because the Philippines has tough bets in middle- and long-distance races as well as in the long jump.

The country won silver and bronze through Lerma Bulauitan and Marestella Torres in long jump, respectively, during the last Asian trackfest. However, runners Eduardo Buenavista and John Lozada were hurting during the event and failed to win medals.

Baguio booters prevail

BAGUIO'S Pines City National High walloped Don Bosco of Tarlac, 8-0, recently at the Benguet State University field to advance to the all-Luzon Coke Go-for-Goal under-16 football finals.

Ronel Kimhai and Nestor Udon knocked in two goals apiece to propel the Baguio booters to the lopsided triumph.

Other Pines City scorers were Justin Bravo, Jade Contas, Marvin Labay and Jayroll Oribello.

The Luzon finals will be held at the Philsports Complex field in Pasig City on Jan. 21-23.

Also vying in the Luzon finals are NCR's Ateneo University, Masbate National Comprehensive High, Gen. Licerio Geronimo Memorial National High and Camarines Norte's Vinzons Pilot High.

The top two teams of Luzon will join the two top teams from Visayas (Cebu's Don Bosco Technology Center and Dumaguete City's San Miguel Municipal High) and Mindanao 9 Iligan's La Salle Academy and Ateneo de Davao) in the national finals set Feb. 9-13 in Dumaguete City.

Chua repeat bid shaky as RP Ladies starts

By Jong Arcano

HEIDI Chua doesn't have to worry about the quantity of players out to stop her from keeping the huge Philippine Ladies Open golf trophy at home.

It's the quality of the challenging cast that should be a valid cause for alarm.

The Fil-Chinese mainstay of the national squad launches her title-retention bid in the 41st edition of the national ladies championship today at the plush Manila Golf Club with practically the same group of local rivals she beat the last time up.

US-based Ria Denise Quiazon and 2000 champion Aileen Rose Yao are back to shoot it out with Chua and so are jungolf sensation Jayvie Agojo and Carmelette Villaroman, who skipped last year's battle due to lack of preparation.

A surprise entry is Yvette de Leon, the 1987 winner and ex-pro who has reverted to amateur status. De Leon is out to show that she still has the game to challenge the young guns.

CHUA PDI FILE PHOTO

Upsilonians golf tourney Friday

THE UPSILONIANS Na Pumapalo tournament will be played Friday, Jan. 17, at the Sherwood Hills Golf and Country Club course in Trece Martirez, Cavite.

About 100 Upsilonians are expected to participate in the one-day tournament, the Upsilon Alumni Association's first activity for the year 2003.

Speaker JDV Cup set at Villamor Jan. 17

THE SPEAKER Jose de Venecia Cup Golf Tournament will be held on Jan. 17 at Villamor, with the House Speaker leading the ceremonial tee-off at 7:30 a.m. Participants will be composed of diplomats of various foreign countries and members of the business community.

The tournament is sponsored by the Center for the Promotion of Peace and Development of Mindanao (CPPDM), a non-government organization engaged in activities aimed at expediting lasting peace and progress in Mindanao.

CPPDM Director General Saeed A. Daof is spearheading the project.

The Board of Directors of the Center for the Promotion of Peace and Development of Mindanao (CPPDM) is composed of highly qualified and experienced technocrats in the country.

Dr. Fernando Bernardo is a former dean of the UPLB College of Agriculture, undersecretary of Education, deputy director general of IRRI, a TOYM awardee, and currently team leader of a World Bank Research Evaluation Team to Indonesia. Dr. Basilio de los Reyes is a former economist at UNDP-FAO, Bangkok, former Program Implementation Agency (Presidential Economic Staff) deputy director, and former professor at UPLB. Dr. Ricardo Lantican, a former TOYM awardee and undersecretary of Science and Technology, is currently a professor emeritus at UPLB. The other directors are Philippine Star columnist Domini M. Torrevillas and Francisco Alejandro, executive producer at ABS-CBN TV. Advisers are Dr. Napoleon Vergara, Dr. Verden Dangilan, Behn Cervantes, Elias Macarandas, lawyer Chet Tan and Gari Tiongco and Dr. Gil Saguiguit.

The closing lunch and awards ceremonies will witness the raffling off of prizes topped by airline tickets to Singapore. Among the donors are Asahi Glass Philippines, Mirant Philippines, Confetti, Natasha, Purple Candle, Via Mare, Avon, DCR, Clark Development Corp., Allied Bank, Yats International, Richwell Trading, Green Thumb, Consumables Corp., and Cravings Group of Companies.

Interested golfers may contact 671-52-73 and 631-1466.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1990, Marianito Abad beat Elmer Cordero to bag the chess rating tournament at the Metropolitan Chess Club in Makati.

NCA 7-Cock derby tonight

IT'S still anybody's race in the four-cock finals of the NCA 7-Cock Derby tonight at the Araneta Coliseum.

After last Monday's three-cock elimination matches, GE Mapalad Jimafer of Alex and Gerry Escalona and Geran of Gerry Fevidal lead with 2-1/2 points while 11 others posted two points. This derby is being jointly hosted by the Firefly Group, Rudy Albano, Chito Bersamin, Rocky Molintas, Eugene Martin, Jun Velasco, Danny Mendoza, Tony Lasala, Edgar Santos and Ruel Ricafort.

Meanwhile, everything is in readiness for the one and only World-Slasher 8-Cock Derby at the Araneta Coliseum on Jan. 20, 22 and 24 hosted by Big Dome owner Nene Araneta, Jun Santiago and Gov. Ito Ynares.

Competing are cockfighters from the United States led by Ray Alexander of Alabama, Dan Gray of Louisiana, Tom Cooper of North Carolina, Roger Roberts of Georgia and California's Rene Medina and Ric de Guzman.

They will pit prowess against the Philippines' best like Nene Araneta, Danding Cojuangco, James Chiongbian, Peping Cojuangco and Esting Teopaco, Gov. Ito Ynares, back-to-back NCA Cocker of the Year Jun Santiago, Dicky Lim of Winslet fame, Eddie and Bomboy Araneta, Pampanga's Jingco and Madlambayan brothers, Alex and Gerry Escalona, Mario Villamor, Boy Jiao, Rudy Albano, Frank Berin, Chito Bersamin, Tos and Charlie Reyes, Eugene Martin and Rocky Molintas, Negros Occidental's Johnny Jalandoni, Boy Velez, Eddie Boy Ledesma and Boy Nilo Lizares; Cebu's Alex Tan; Southern Tagalog's Tony Lasala, Danny Mendoza and Romy Panganiban; Mindanao's Claude Bautista, Boy Primalion and Arthur and Bebot Uy.

La Salle, UE keep unbeaten marks

DE LA Salle stayed unscathed in men's baseball and University of the East kept a spotless record in women's softball in University Athletic Association of the Philippines (UAAP) action over the weekend.

The Green Archers made their traditional rivals Ateneo eat dust at the Rizal Memorial Stadium, 13-1, Sunday for a 7-0 card, even as the UE women made it a multiple whammy weekend for Ateneo at the Santo Tomas field, repeating over the Lady Eagles via a 17-0 shutout for a comfortable seat alone at the top of the field with a 6-0 card.

UE continued its domination of Ateneo at the UE gymnasium, scoring an easy 25-17, 25-10 victory to join Santo Tomas at the top of the boys' high school volleyball standings with five wins and one loss each. La Salle-Zobel ran third with a 4-2 record, followed by Ateneo with 1-5 and UP with 0-5.

Heritage run slates side races

THE PASIG River Heritage Marathon will have three additional side races this year besides the full marathon, which will start from Intramuros and end in the Global City of Fort Bonifacio.

The Feb. 23 event will also include the 10K, 5K and 3K side events, which will take place at the Fort Bonifacio enclave.

The 42K race for marathoners 18 years and above will cross 11 bridges that straddle the Pasig River in the cities of Manila, Mandaluyong, San Juan, Pasig and Makati.

The 5K fun run—a staple side event of the major race since the PRHM's introduction in 2000— allows all ages to participate.

The new events—a 10K and a 3K race—were included to accommodate the request of older runners for a still competitive, but strenuous event.

A cash prize of P390,000 is the biggest so far. The prize money will be given to the top male and female finishers in the different events. Even the biggest participating group will be given a cash prize of P15,000 for joining the PRHM. This event is sponsored by Unilever-Philippines, DuPont Philippines, Viva Mineral Water, San Miguel Corporation and dwIZ radio.

For inquiries, call Ramon "Bong" Jacinto Socco Jr. at 528-0504 or Eloisa at 527-6376.

National Sports Grill turns 2

NATIONAL Sports Grill celebrates its second anniversary on Jan. 24 with an array of activities for its regular patrons and sports fans.

The Spirit of '67 will provide the nightlong entertainment during the thanksgiving affair for the NSG's rousing success.

People flocked at the NSG the past year to watch their favorite international and local sporting events like the Fifa World Cup, and the UAAP championship match between Ateneo and La Salle.

NBN 4's remote broadcast of the Busan Asian Games was also held at NSG, which is the first in the country to blend food, sports, spirits and fun.

Due to its ambience and good food, NSG has been the preferred choice for corporate banquets, press conferences, product launches, awarding ceremonies and even children's parties. It is also a good venue for corporate functions and private parties at "half the cost and double the fun!"

The latest promos, "Refillable Fries" and "Beer Bucket Blast," have proven to be the perfect treats for loyal sports fans.

NSG is located at the 3rd floor, Greenbelt I, Ayala Center, Makati City. For reservations, call 752-5431.

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Paul Miñoza shares lead; Frankie skies to 77

DAVAO CITY—Amateur Paul Miñoza fired a 3-under-par 69 yesterday to gain a share of the lead with professional Elmer Salvador in the First Gentleman's Circuit at the Rancho Palos Verdes here.

His effort put the buffer on the 77 of Frankie Miñoza, the most eminent of five Miñoza brothers playing out of Del Monte Golf Club.

Paul, four years younger than Frankie at 38, birdied three par-5s in a strong start in the Tour's debut in Mindanao.

Just two months ago, Paul hoisted the champion's trophy as the amateur partner of his elder brother Raul in the U-Bix Riviera National Pro-Am at Riviera's Couples in Silang, Cavite.

That win earned him a slot in the national team that competed in the recent Hong Kong Putra Cup.

He shared a one-stroke lead with Salvador, one of the hometown favorites who owns the course record of 65.

One stroke behind were Willie de Tomas and Edwin Estrera in an exciting start to this seventh leg of the Tour bankrolled by First Gentleman Mike Arroyo's Foundation and San Miguel Beer. WG&A Super Ferry is the official carrier.

Salvador made six birdies with putts no longer than four feet and knocked in a seventh from outside the green that cushioned the jolt of four bogeys.

The course found at the heart of the Dizon fruit plantation was wind-swept in the afternoon.

Asian Tour campaigner Danny Zarate was the only other player who broke par with his 71, putting him in a solo fifth just two shots behind.

Frankie Miñoza started with a first-hole birdie.

But that was all there is to it as Miñoza bogeyed six holes.

The perceived notion that Frankie was not his usual serious self was brushed aside by his swing coach Roger Retuerto: "He's still making some adjustments on his swing, his driving was okay but the short game was just not there."

Playing in the first flight at the break of dawn, Paul Miñoza exploited the tame winds to attack the pins with such ferocity even with the many hazards guarding the greens and fairways.

"Mas tahimik, mas madali. Talagang mahirap ang kundisyon sa hapon kasi malakas na ang hangin, mahirap ang club selection," said the late-blooming Paul.

Paul could have inched ahead of Salvador if not for a three-putt bogey on the tricky 18th, a tough finishing hole.

Benjie Magada, the top moneymaker of the circuit organized by the Federation of Golf Clubs Philippines, Inc. with two leg victories, was among those who scored even-par 72s.

Tied with him were Sta. Elena stage titlist Antonio Lascuña, Rey Pagunsan, Mario Siodina and Eddie Bagtas.

Sherwood Hills leg winner Cassius Casas led the group at 73 that also included Al Cruz, Vicencio Lascuña, Peter Miñoza, Mars Pucay and Canlubang stop champion Richard Sinfuego.

PAUL MIÑOZA

The leading scores:

69--P. Miñoza, E. Salvador; 70--W. de Tomas E. Estrera; 71--D. Zarate; 72--E. Bagtas, A. Lascuña, B. Magada, R. Pagunsan, M. Siodina; 73--C. Casas, A. Cruz, V. Lascuña, P. Miñoza, M. Pucay, R. Sinfuego

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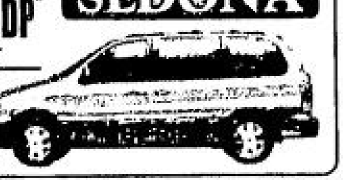

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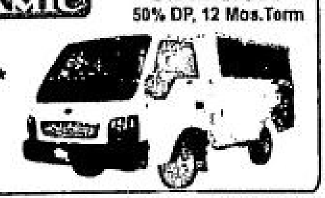

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METRO
E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Louie C. Camino

5 'possible killers' picked up

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO policemen and three Muslims have been rounded up in connection with the cold-blooded slay of Ateneo Law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas, authorities said yesterday.

The action was taken by Pasay and Dasmariñas (Cavite) policemen.

The two officers who were picked up resembled Llamas' killer who was described by witnesses as dark, burly, and curly haired, according to Pasay police chief Oscar Catalan.

But when presented to witnesses Monday night, the officers who belong to a Metro Manila police district, were eventually cleared, Catalan said.

Earlier Monday, the witnesses singled out the two policemen from the official personnel data sheet of Metro Manila officers and claimed that either them was the "possible killer," he added.

"The fact that we had practically placed policemen in a police line-up should dispel insinuations that we are coddling the gunman," Catalan told the INQUIRER.

Some witnesses had earlier presumed that Llamas' killer was a police officer after he reportedly identified himself as such while fleeing the Buendia-Taft Avenue area where he had shot dead the victim over a minor traffic row.

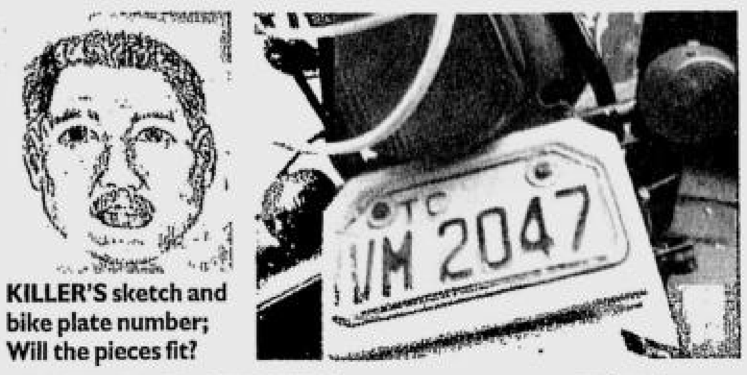
Early yesterday morning, Dasmariñas police took custody of three Muslims who also resembled the killer. Two of them are residents of Barangay Datu Esmael, a community of about 40,000 Muslims in Dasmariñas. The third guy lives in nearby Gen. Mariano Alvarez.

Catalan said none of them was identified as the gunman when presented to two of the witnesses at around 8 a.m. yesterday.

Police are still scouring Datu Esmael for a certain Cola M. Ditato, the registered owner of the Kawasaki motorcycle (VM-2047) which the gunman was driving when he accidentally bumped Llamas' car.

Ditato has yet to surface, fueling speculations that he could be the topnotch Law graduate's killer.

"There's something fishy about residents of Datu Esmael," Catalan said. "It seems they're are protecting Ditato. We hope others who know this guy would volunteer information about his whereabouts."



KILLER'S sketch and bike plate number; Will the pieces fit?

'But why is he hiding?'

By Philip C. Tubeza

DID businessman Cola M. Ditato really shoot Ateneo Law graduate Jose Ramon Llamas?

National Bureau of Investigation agents said yesterday that they were waiting for a witness who might be able to confirm if Ditato shot the topnotch Ateneo graduate.

NBI sources said Didato, of Block 21, Lot 3, Barangay Datu Esmael, Dasmariñas, Cavite is

BUT WHY/ A24

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JAN 15, WEDNESDAY 422-9877

Recantation looms in Baron slay

By Christian V. Esguerra

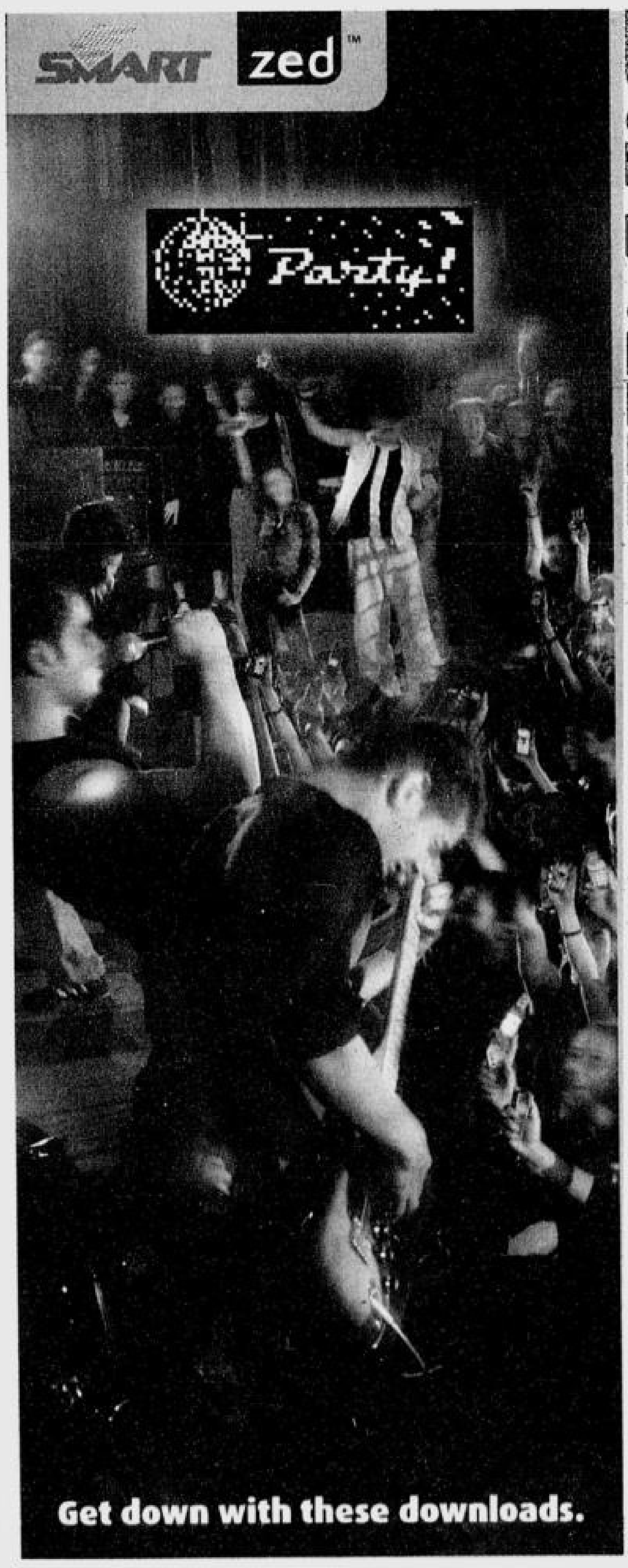
PROSECUTORS are bracing for the possible recantation of statements of the three confessed killers of government informant Baron Cervantes as the murder trial opens today.

Ex-Marine Sgt. Joseph Mostrales, the confessed gunman, Erlindo Torres, and Jaime Centeno--hinted at a recantation when they pleaded not guilty during their arraignment last October, according to Leonard De Vera, the Cervantes family's lawyer.

Before the arraignment, the three had admitted in sworn statements that they had formed the core of the group that carried out the Cervantes murder on New Year's Eve of 2001. They had also identified Supt. Rafael Cardeño as the mastermind.

Should the accused recant their sworn statements, De Vera said the prosecution would push for their conviction on the strength of the testimonies of more than 10 witnesses. They will include Supt. Eric Velasquez, who, as then chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group's legal division, collected vital pieces of evidence against Cardeño and his group.

First to take the witness stand will be the security guard who supposedly saw Mostrales shoot and kill Cervantes in front of a drugstore on Alabang-Zapote Road in Las Piñas.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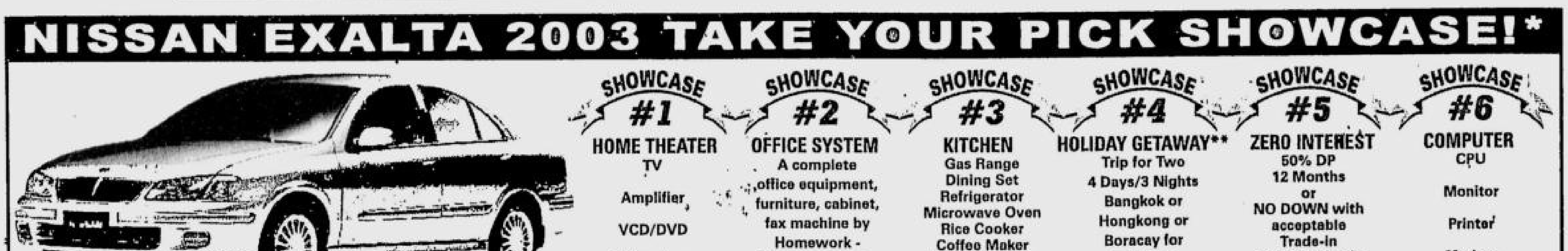
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Pacquiao very sick

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

WOULD you fall ill if you lose P80,000 in a billiards match?

That exact poser was asked me yesterday.

No, I told the morning investigator, I won't—'coz, in the first place, I cannot hope to bet even P1,000 in a pool game.

But you do bet and play billiards?

Yes, I said, but only randomly now, I play mostly alone, using only three balls, I love to do carom, my father's favorite game when he was still around.

Ok, ok, said the friendly morning caller, but you think Manny Pacquiao would suffer a bum stomach if he loses P80,000 in a pool match?

How do I know? I have heard he's a big gambler but I don't know that thing about the bum stomach. As a kid, I had often gambled in the marketplace. I had lost and sometimes lost my appetite, but I don't remember having gotten sick.

***

You know what, continued the caller, Manny Pacquiao lost P80,000 in a billiards game in Davao.

That's none of my business, I would be bothered if he, say, had lost inside the boxing ring.

But he lost the big money last Friday.

So? He could lose or win in billiards any day, it's his money. Let's leave him alone.

Hey, have you forgotten, Pacquiao was supposed to be in Manila, not in Davao on Friday, for the PSA which honored him as its Sportsman of the Year?

Well, Ronnie Nathanielsz said Pacquiao sounded very weak when they talked Friday. We're supposed to believe Mr. Nathanielsz.

Well, said the caller, it was not a mere party the PSA had assembled for Pacquiao, but the feast of feasts, don't you think we should verify where he was on Friday?

I'll try, I said.

***

Call it coincidence, but before noon yesterday, I got a text feed from a trusted ally in Cebu, Salven Lagumbay of the Cebu Daily News. The txt message read: NOW IT CAN B TOLD, PQUIAO WAS PLAYING BILIARDS & LOST 80T TO JUN LAUD OF MAA, GEN SAN, DURING THE PSA AWARDS NITE.

I texted back for confirmation. His answer: GOT IT FROM TRUSTED WITNESSES AND VERY RELIABLE SOURCES.

It was hard to believe. Anyway, before I could dig deeper, I was stunned by the column yesterday of my dear kumpadre, Fred Lumba, of Malaya.

The piece confirmed what Salven Lagumbay had reported.

Fred Lumba went as far as name the place where Pacquiao played Friday night: Cherry Billiards along Bolton St. in Davao City.

"Last Thursday, Pacquiao also lost P180,000 to Jun Laud, barangay head of Maa," Fred Lumba said. "He lost another P80,000 Friday and on Saturday was still trying to recoup his losses."

Before I could finish this piece, Virgie Romano of Abante called up to say Pacquiao had actually suffered a string of pool game setbacks.

"Other than the P180,000 in Davao City, he lost P500,000 in Digos the week before," Ms Romano reported.

By the way, Fred Lumba bared that people very close to Pacquiao were the ones who fed him the details of the world champ's gambling binge.

It's a pity, I said, but maybe the poor guy just wanted to win back some of the great sums he had squandered. He was only human. He had all the reasons to be very sick.

BF drive to go nationwide

By Leila Salaverria and Jerome Aning

FROM Metro Manila to the rest of the country.

The controversial sidewalk clearing operations of the Metro Manila Development Authority will go nationwide as soon as MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando assumes his post as secretary of the Department of Public Works and Highways.

In a phone interview yesterday, Fernando said he would immediately "send out instructions to the (DPWH) directors" to remove obstructions on the roads and sidewalks.

He said that most of the regional offices of the DPWH already have equipment to remove obstructions, but added that he would procure additional materials for the clearing campaign if needed.

Last week, Fernando was officially declared as acting DPWH secretary, replacing Simeon Datumanong, who was appointed Justice secretary.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza yesterday wished Fernando luck, saying that the MMDA chair should "buckle down to work" since there will be "many villains as the 2004 elections approach."

"I want him to succeed, but he must get down to work and finish the long-delayed projects of the DPWH and MMDA because there is so little time," the mayor said.

But Atienza admitted that he was a little discomfited by Fernando's appointment since the mayor wanted the DPWH to devolve its functions to local government units.

He complained that the DPWH is supervising construction of barangay halls, cleaning the drainage and repairing city streets when the department should be concerned with national tasks, such as building mass transport systems, inter-island bridges and national highways.

Atienza added that with Fernando's appointment as DPWH secretary, local and national infrastructure projects would be supervised by a single person.

Earlier, Fernando said he had been tapped to head the DPWH so that he could expand the projects he has begun in Marikina and Metro Manila to the rest of the country.

FERNANDO

His sidewalk clearing campaign in Metro Manila drew strong opposition from illegal sidewalk vendors and urban poor groups, whose livelihood had been directly hit by the MMDA project.

Report: Oil firms did not comply with depot pact

By Jerome Aning

THE THREE oil firms operating the Pandacan fuel depot "have not fully (lived up) to their commitments" under an agreement they entered into with the Manila city government.

This means City Hall can now shut down the facility for being a fire hazard, potential terrorist target and threat to the safety of Pandacan residents.

In a press briefing, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said the monitoring task force he had formed reported that Caltex, Shell and Petron failed to comply with at least two terms of the MOU.

He said only 14, or half of the 28 fuel tanks that were supposed to be decommissioned, have been dismantled.

The establishment of a green buffer zone, which is actually a linear park meant to protect the nearby residential areas, has not been completed, Atienza said.

But the mayor did not mention the oil companies' compliance with the third term, which is a common fuel storage and distribution facility.

"We are now awaiting the report and explanation of the three oil firms," Atienza. "We expect that they would attach their report to their application for the renewal of their permits for 2003."

The deadline for the renewal of business permits is on Jan. 20.

Atienza also formally announced that oil firms continued operation at the depot, even on a limited or reduced basis, would have to be decided upon by the City Council.

He said the oil firms would have to talk to the councilors if they would wish to extend depot operations, since this would entail an amendment of Ordinance No. 8027, which phased out the depot by converting its site from an industrial to a commercial zone.

Probers crack human jigsaw poser in QC

By Alcuin Papa

QUEZON City police have finally cracked the mystery of the human jigsaw puzzle as two relatives of the victims have surfaced to claim the various body parts found in different parts of the city over the weekend.

Investigators of the Central Police District Criminal Unit believe that a drug bust gone bad was the reason why victims Nelson Alojado and Estemoson Bolan were killed.

Fe Concepcion, 22, on Monday went to the CPD to claim the body of her live-in partner Alojado, alias Boyet, 22, of Barangay Holy Spirit, Quezon City.

Concepcion said was able to identify one of the male torsos found over the weekend because of a tattoo of a flower on the back.

Bolan, 30, also of Barangay Holy Spirit, was positively identified by his mother Salvacion due to the tattoos "Alas" and "Boy Turla" on the body.

Concepcion said that she last saw Alojado last Friday. She told police that Bolan fetched Alojado from their residence and that Alojado told her they would be going some place. Alojado never came back.

Bolan and Alejado, who had already been detained at Camp Karingal for illegal possession of firearms, are said to be close.

She admitted that Alojado had been using drugs frequently but had no enemies.

Investigation revealed that Bolan had incurred the ire of a certain drug dealer, which could have been the reason why the two were killed.

Over the weekend, two male torsos and various legs and arms were found in different places, particularly dumpsites, around Quezon City.

Fetus, not bomb, found in QC bus

By Alcuin Papa

PANIC struck employees of a Quezon City bus terminal Monday night after a mysterious package was found inside a bus.

Workers of the Lippad Bus company on Old Sauyo Road in Novaliches, Quezon City, found the mysterious package inside bus number 36 at around 9:30 p.m., police said

Thinking the package contained an explosive device, the workers immediately called the police.

Bomb disposal experts immediately responded to the call and examined the package, which was wrapped in blue plastic. But to their horror, the police found a seven-month old fetus inside the package.

Randy Pascua, bus conductor, said a female passenger had boarded the bus and sat in the row of seats where the package was found.

He said the woman quickly alighted on Dahlia Street in Fair-view, Quezon City.

'But why ...'

From page A23

a "legitimate" dry goods trader.

"He is a dealer of dried fish and other dry goods," a source said.

But Didato allegedly had not been seen in his neighborhood since he closed his store on Saturday. NBI agents visited the area on Monday.

"Up to today, he is still missing. Why is he in hiding if he has nothing to do with it?" the source asked yesterday.

Ditato was linked to the case after Land Transportation Office records showed that the Kawasaki motorcycle, with plate number VM-2047, that the gunman used was his.

The unidentified suspect shot 26-year-old Llamas at the busy intersection of Buendia and Taft avenues in Pasay on Friday afternoon.

The suspect reportedly blew his top after Llamas' car allegedly hit and damaged his motorcycle.

Witnesses said Llamas had gone out of his car and was talking with the gunman when shot.

"The victim was about to write something on a piece of paper when the suspect stepped back and opened fire," the source said.

Another source added that the NBI was checking with Camp Crame if Ditato was issued a gun license.

"But if he is really it, I believe he was given one," the source said.

METROBRIEFS

Stabbed in Makati

MERLYN Cordon, 18, landed in the hospital after he tried to stop a fight between his mother and brother. Police said Merlyn saw his mother and 21-year-old brother Marvin heatedly arguing in front of their house on Grill Street, Barangay Rizal, Makati, at around 1:15 p.m. yesterday. When Merlyn tried to break up the fight, Marvin went into their house, grabbed a bread-knife and stabbed his brother, who was then rushed to the Ospital ng Makati. Police said the suspect is suffering from depression brought about by a kidney disease, and for which he has to undergo dialysis every week. Investigators said that the victim's family is not interested in filing charges against the suspect. *Leila Salaverria*

Slain in Quezon City

BREAKING up is really hard to do. This was discovered by housewife Jean Leslie Espino, 25, who was stabbed dead by her boyfriend, student Alexander Estrellas, 25, in Quezon City early yesterday morning. Police said Espino, 25, of GSIS Village, Project 8, Quezon City, went to Estrella's house in Barangay Pasong Tamo, Quezon City, to retrieve her Nokia 8210 cell phone and P6,000 in cash. Espino reportedly sparked an argument when she also tried to end their relationship. Police said Estrellas pulled out a bladed weapon and stabbed Espino several times. As Espino lay dying on the ground, Estrellas fled. Espino was declared dead on arrival at the Gen. Malvar Hospital, said SPO4 Marcelino Castillo of the Central Police District. Police are now hunting down Estrellas. *Alcuin Papa*

Razed in Pasig City

FIRE broke out in a densely populated slum community in Pasig City on Monday and destroyed more than P150,000 worth of property. The 15-minute blaze started at 12:09 p.m. in one of the shanties in Lupang Pari, Sitio Kumanoy, Barangay San Miguel. FO1 Ernand San Agustin of the Pasig City fire station said only the timely arrival of firefighters prevented the blaze from going out of control. San Agustin said investigators are now trying to determine the cause of the fire. *Nelson Flores*

Arrested in Culiat

FUGITIVE Malik Halis who is wanted for drug charges and illegal possession of firearms was arrested in Quezon City over the weekend. Chief Insp. Bart Bustamante, chief of the Central Police District's Warrant and Subpoena Unit, said Halis, who claims to be a dismissed member of the defunct Philippine Constabulary, was arrested inside the Salam Mosque Compound in Culiat, Quezon City. Judge Diosdado Peralta of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court issued a warrant of arrest for Halis, who was found guilty of selling drugs and guns on June 30, 1997. Halis was sentenced to 12 years in prison. Bustamante said his office received information on the whereabouts of Halis and quickly sent his men. *Alcuin Papa*

Rounded up in Project 4

THE CENTRAL Police District arrested four men over the weekend. In a new conference at CPD Headquarters in Camp Karingal, Police identified the arrested suspects as Marcelo Melegrito, 46, of Project 4, Quezon City, Arnel Pontorosto, 25, of Gitna, Cogeo, Rizal, Alvin Asana, 33, of Heroes Hill, Caloocan City, and Amina Apao, 25, of Barangay Tatalon, Quezon City. The four men were accused of breaking into the house of seaman Richie Bernardo. Members of CPD Police Station 8 arrested the suspects in Project 4. *Alcuin Papa*

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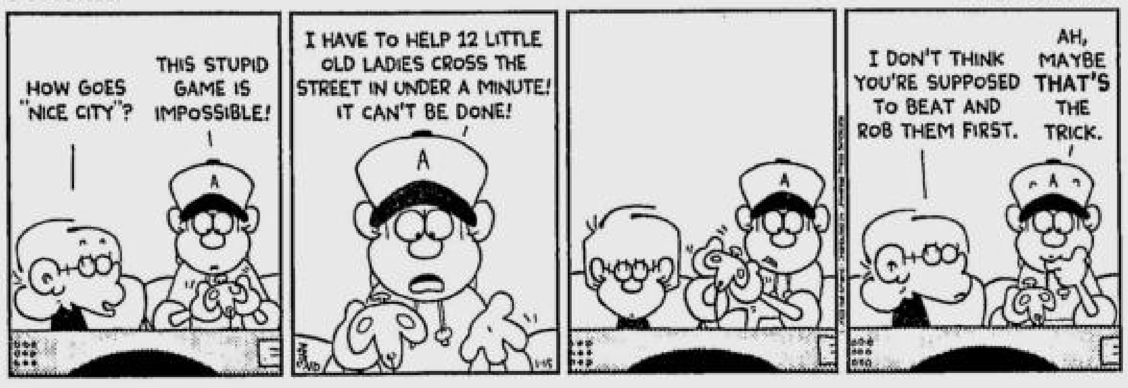
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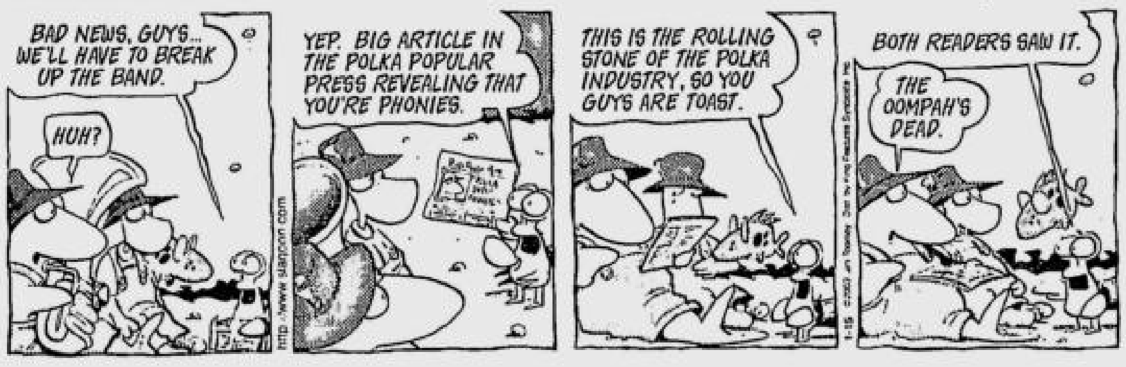
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY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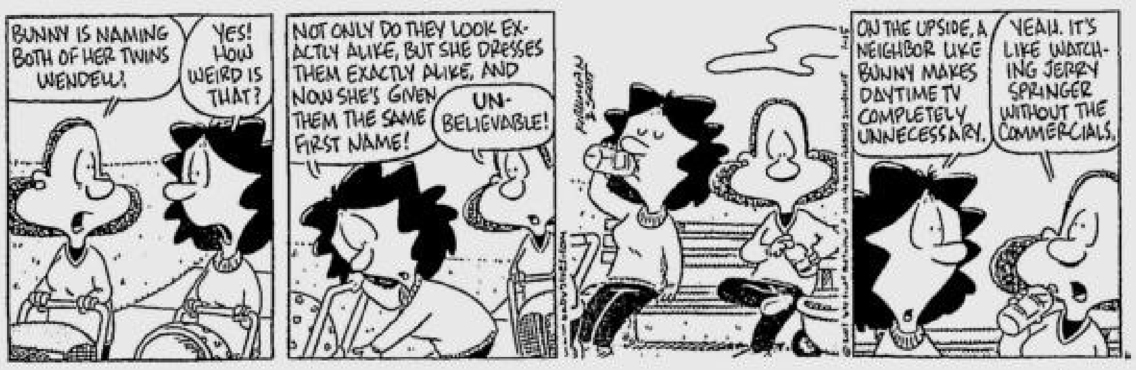
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT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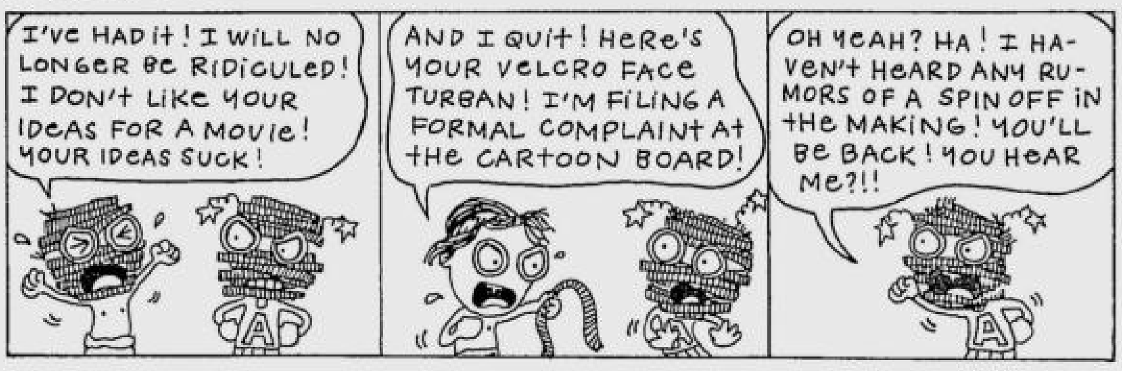
UN-BELIEVABLE!
ON THE UPSIDE, A NEIGHBOR LIKE BUNNY MAKES DAYTIME TV COMPLETELY UNNECESSARY.
YEAH. IT'S LIKE WATCHING JERRY SPRINGER WITHOUT THE COMMERCIALS.

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I'VE HAD IT! I WILL NO LONGER BE RIDICULED! I DON'T LIKE YOUR IDEAS FOR A MOVIE! YOUR IDEAS SUCK!
AND I QUIT! HERE'S YOUR VELCRO FACE TURBAN! I'M FILING A FORMAL COMPLAINT AT THE CARTOON BOARD!
OH YEAH? HA! I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY RUMORS OF A SPIN OFF IN THE MAKING! YOU'LL BE BACK! YOU HEAR ME?!!

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chad Lowe, Charo, Lloyd Bridges, Martin Luther King Jr.

Happy Birthday: Clear up whatever matters are holding you back this year and prepare to start anew. You will be more open to socializing, especially if it will help you get ahead in your chosen field. This is the year to mix business with pleasure. Your numbers are 4, 23, 27, 35, 41, 46

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Choose your friends wisely today. Don't wonder about things—be blunt and ask questions. Someone you respect will have good solutions to any romantic troubles you have.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): To make a financial decision based on your emotional state will only lead to regrets. You will have what it takes to complete what you start, so focus on your work.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Talk is cheap, but if you say the wrong things, you may find yourself in trouble with someone you care about. It's probably best to bide your time, say little and only observe.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Check out some different lifestyles today. You may discover that you are ready for a change. Moving in a new direction will lift your spirits and give you added enthusiasm.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You have to initiate change if you really want something to happen. Renovation, redecorating or major moves are in order. Opportunities to make a professional shift are present.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): It won't be smooth sailing today. You can expect to face some opposition. Have your game plan ready and don't get involved in other people's affairs.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Get involved in debate and competition today. You are beginning to change your image in the eyes of others and your confidence is growing.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Social activities will lead to meeting someone special. Your intellectual approach to life will fascinate those you encounter. Making a decision will give you a better emotional outlook.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Don't lose sight of what it is you are trying to do. Hold on to your money. Take your time when making decisions that will lead to a commitment.

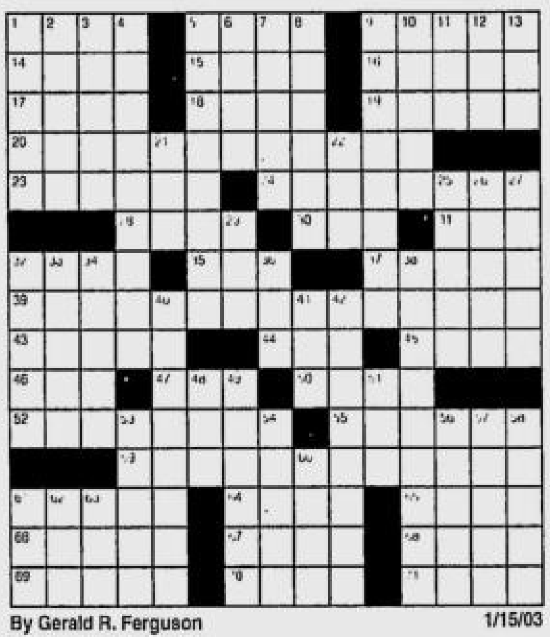
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Focus on your priorities. Don't hesitate to back away from a deal that appears to be faulty. An opportunity to find out valuable information is forthcoming.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Look for ways to make yourself the best you can be both physically and mentally. You will raise your popularity if you speak up. Your ideas are much better than you give yourself credit for.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take a closer look at who you are and what you are doing. It would be better to stick to your own business today.

Birthday Baby: You will intrigue others with your expansive views and your ability to take a concept and blow it up into something worthwhile. You will set the pace and others will follow your lead.

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Gerald R. Ferguson
Portland, OR

1/15/03

ACROSS
1 Sages
5 Breath mint
9 "Scent of a __"
14 Comic Sandler
15 Sly glance
16 Island west of Curacao
17 Cry of pain
18 Napoleon's first exile
19 Forum wear
20 Without warning
23 Former Egyptian leader
24 High Street shops
28 Too many, in Tours
30 Part of a wd.
31 Pol's cash provider
32 Waikiki's island
35 Rock group, __ Fighters
37 Rome's port
39 Without warning
43 Chair maker
44 Red or Yellow
45 Pindar poetry
46 Deed
47 Swiss mount
50 Actor Estrada
52 Relaxation treatment
55 Clobbers
59 Without warning
61 Comb stopper
64 Winglike parts
65 Stew pot
66 Bloody channel
67 1965 PGA champion Dave
68 Run of the __
69 Closer to reality
70 French religious figs.
71 One Truman

DOWN
1 Central American language group
2 Ms. Rogers St. Johns
3 Causes rancor
4 Duplicity
5 Remove clutter from
6 Lampreys
7 Attempt to disprove
8 Exchanges
9 London bridge
10 Maine campus site
11 Kisser
12 Arabian outerwear
13 Brainy grp.
21 __-de-lance
22 Period of light
25 Elected
26 Pine Tree State
27 Emulates Ella
29 Poker winnings
32 __ de la Hoya
33 Hastily
34 Pursues prey
36 Surprised exclamations
38 Diversion device
40 Prophetic
41 Shoe width
42 Demonstration participants
48 Iranian desert, Dasht-e __
49 Golf events
51 Ferocity
53 Rich cake
54 D sharp
56 Former Yankee pitcher Reynolds
57 Ponders
58 Shuts tightly
60 Grain-field weed
61 Plopped
62 Negative conjunction
63 Island group in the Moluccas

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

Z	O	R	B	A	■	H	A	S	P	■	Y	U	K	S
A	R	E	A	S	■	A	T	T	U	■	A	S	E	A
P	E	E	R	S	■	S	L	I	T	■	R	E	A	L
S	O	D	B	U	S	T	E	R	S	■	D	U	N	E
■	■	■	■	M	A	Y	A	■	C	A	M	P	U	S
B	E	R	G	E	N	■	S	C	H	W	A	■	■	■
A	M	O	R	■	T	U	T	U	■	E	S	S	A	Y
B	I	B	E	L	O	T	■	B	E	D	T	I	M	E
A	L	B	E	E	■	A	R	E	S	■	E	M	M	A
■	■	■	N	I	C	H	E	■	T	O	R	P	O	R
H	A	M	S	A	Y	■	M	I	E	N	■	■	■	■
A	N	E	W	■	G	R	A	S	S	R	O	O	T	S
D	O	R	A	■	N	A	I	L	■	U	N	D	U	E
O	D	O	R	■	E	R	N	E	■	S	T	I	N	T
N	E	E	D	■	T	E	S	T	■	H	O	N	E	S

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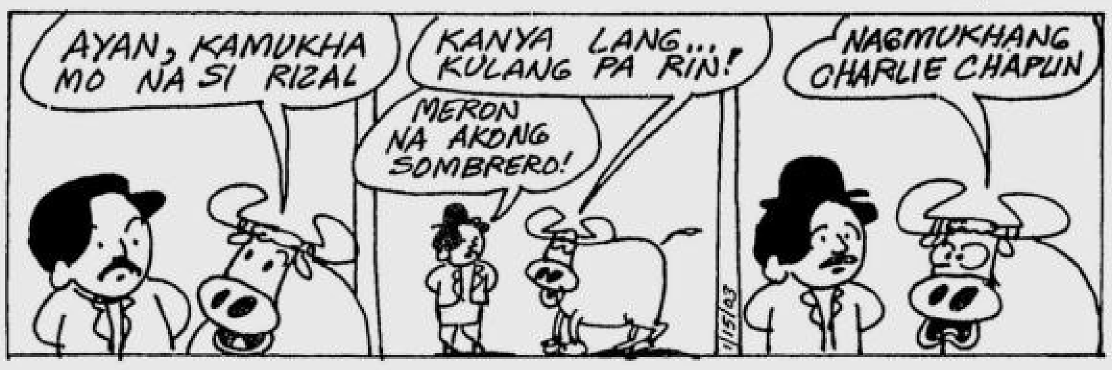
1/15/03

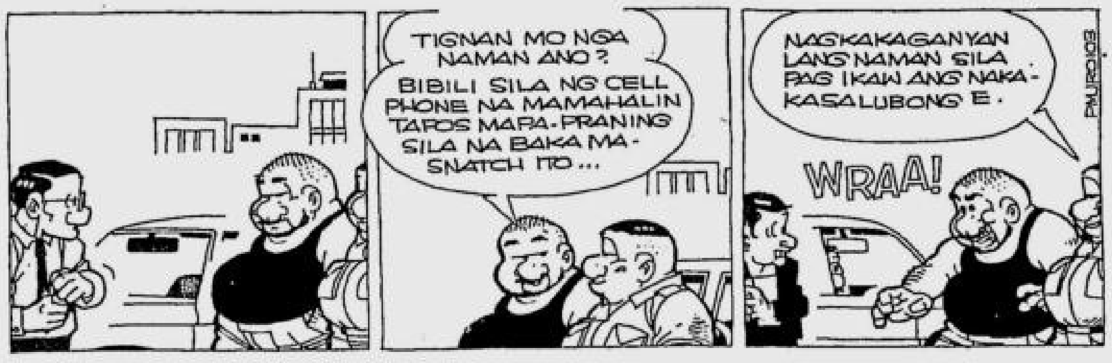
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


AYAN, KAMUKHA MO NA SI RIZAL
KANYA LANG... KULANG PA RIN!
MERON NA AKONG SOMBRERO!
NAGMUKHANG CHARLIE CHAPLIN
1/15/03

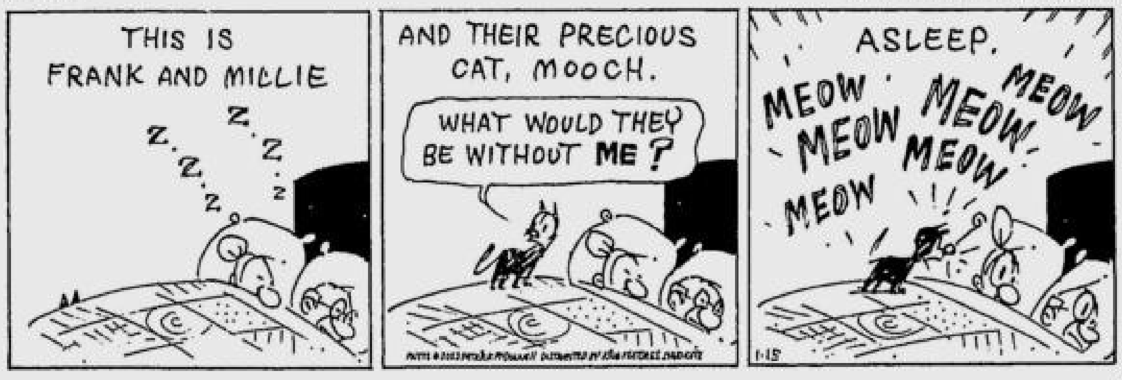
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


TIGNAN MO NGA NAMAN ANO? BIBILI SILA NG CELL PHONE NA MAMAHALIN TAPOS MAPA-PRANING SILA NA BAKA MA-SNATCH ITO...
NAGKAKAGANYAN LANG NAMAN SILA PAG IKAW ANG NAKA-KASALUBONG E.
WRAA!
PMJR0103

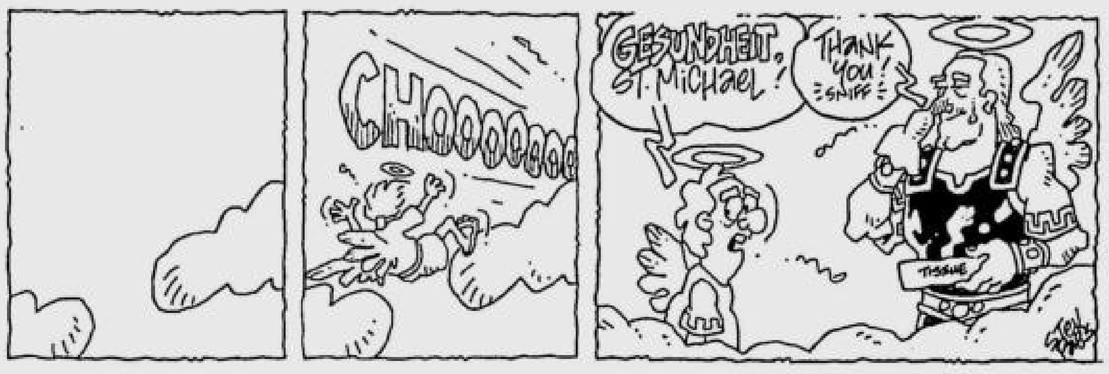
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


THIS IS FRANK AND MILLIE
Z Z Z Z Z Z
AND THEIR PRECIOUS CAT, MOOCH.
WHAT WOULD THEY BE WITHOUT ME?
ASLEEP.
MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW MEOW
1-15

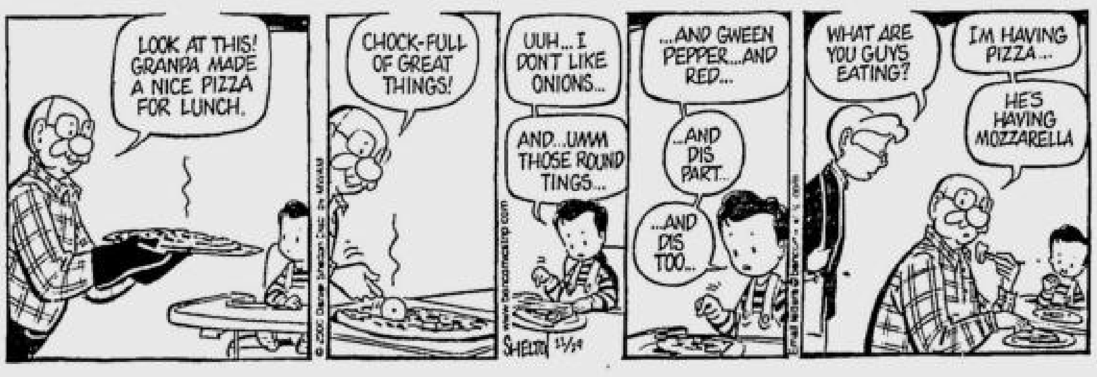
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


CHOOOOOOO
GESUNDHEIT, ST. MICHAEL!
THANK YOU! SNIFF
TISSUE

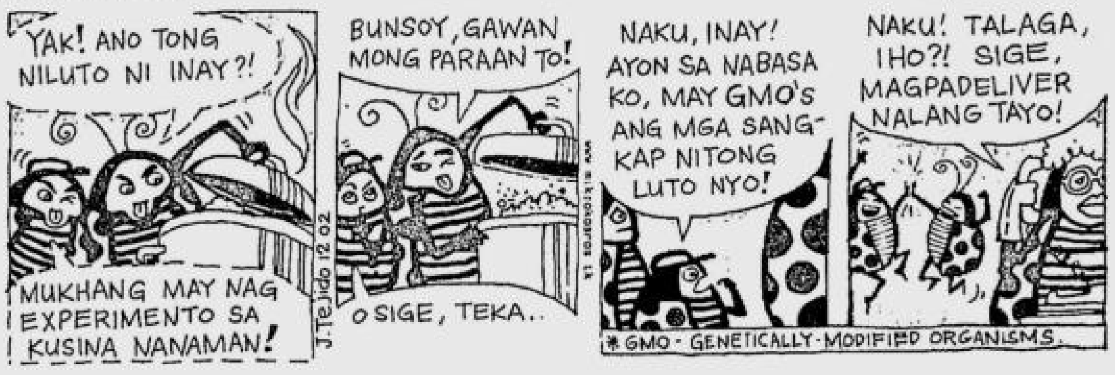
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


LOOK AT THIS! GRANPA MADE A NICE PIZZA FOR LUNCH.
CHOCK-FULL OF GREAT THINGS!
UUH... I DON'T LIKE ONIONS...
AND...UMM THOSE ROUND TINGS...
...AND GWEEN PEPPER...AND RED...
...AND DIS PART...
...AND DIS TOO...
WHAT ARE YOU GUYS EATING?
I'M HAVING PIZZA...
HE'S HAVING MOZZARELLA
www.bencomicstrip.com
SHELTON

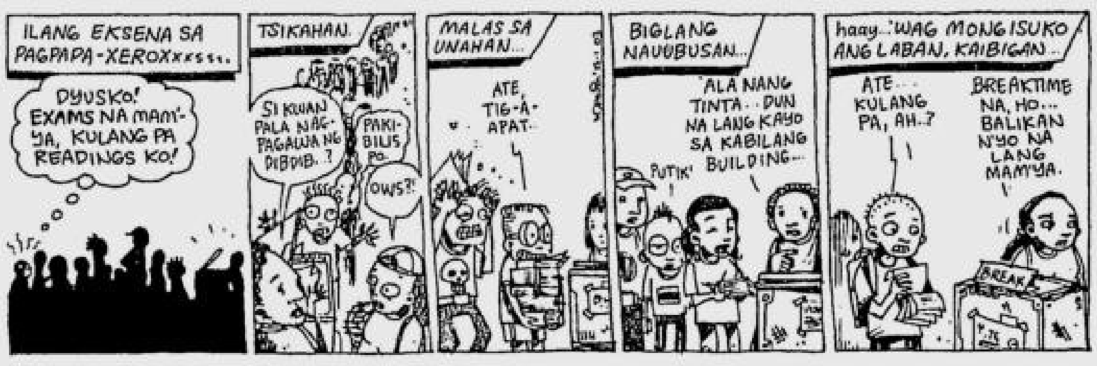
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


YAK! ANO TONG NILUTO NI INAY?!
MUKHANG MAY NAG EXPERIMENTO SA KUSINA NANAMAN!
BUNSOY, GAWAN MONG PARAAN TO!
O SIGE, TEKA..
NAKU, INAY! AYON SA NABASA KO, MAY GMO'S ANG MGA SANGKAP NITONG LUTO NYO!
NAKU! TALAGA, IHO?! SIGE, MAGPADELIVER NALANG TAYO!
*GMO - GENETICALLY-MODIFIED ORGANISMS.
J. Tejido 12 02

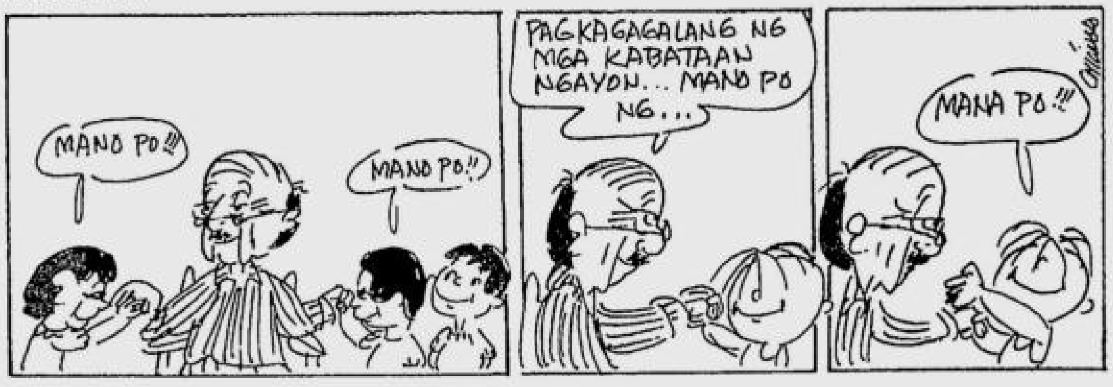
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


ILANG EKSENA SA PAGPAPA-XEROXxxxx...
DYUSKO! EXAMS NA MAMYA, KULANG PA READINGS KO!
TSIKAHAN.
SI KUAN PALA NAG-PAGAWA NG DIBDIB..?
PAKI-BILIS PO..
OWS?!
MALAS SA UNAHAN...
ATE, TIG-4 APAT
BIGLANG NAUUBUSAN...
ALA NANG TINTA.. DUN NA LANG KAYO SA KABILANG BUILDING..
PUTIK!
haay..!WAG MONG ISUKO ANG LABAN, KAIBIGAN...
ATE... KULANG PA, AH..?
BREAKTIME NA, HO... BALIKAN N'YO NA LANG MAMYA.
BREAK

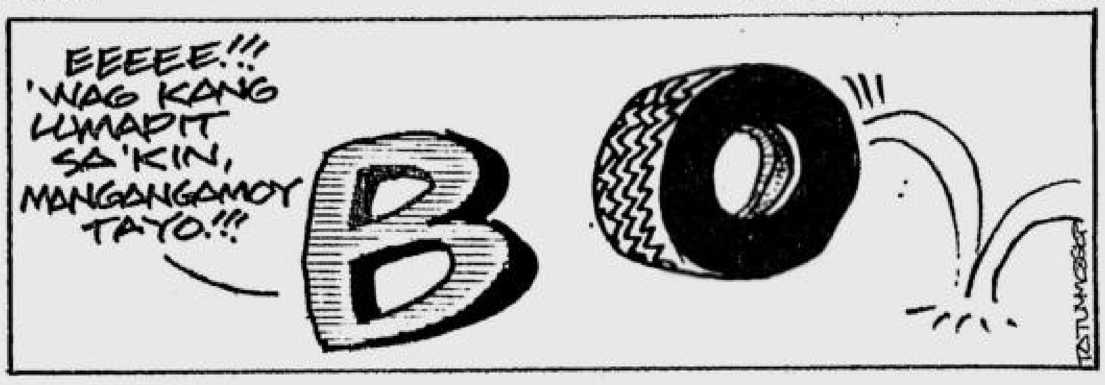
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


MANO PO!!!
MANO PO!!
PAGKAGAGALANG NG MGA KABATAAN NGAYON... MANO PO NG...
MANA PO!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


EEEEE!!! 'WAG KANG LUMAPIT SA'KIN, MANGANGAMOY TAYO.!!!
B
O

For sreening times, call 729-7777. Schedules are subject to change without prior notice.

AYALA CINEMAS NOW SHOWING

ALL DIGITAL SOUND CINEMAS

G1 GLORIETTA 1
1 RING (ORIG. JAPAN) / THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
4 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS

G4 GLORIETTA 4
1 LOTR: TWO TOWERS / THE RING (Hollywood)
2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 11:30, 3:10, 6:50, 10:30
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 HEAVEN
6 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
7 RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 RING (ORIGINAL JAPANESE VERSION)
2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS

Onstage
JOSE MARI CHAN - HEART OF A SONG WRITER
Jan. 17 - 18 / 9PM

GB3 GREENBELT 3
1 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 11:30, 3:00, 6:30, 10:00
2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:10, 3:40, 7:10, 10:40
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS 12:50, 4:20, 7:50, 11:20
4 LOTR: TWO TOWERS 1:30, 5:00 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD) 9:00 PM
5 HALF PAST DEAD 12:05, 2:20, 4:35, 6:50, 9:05, 11:20

ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER
1 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
2 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
3 THE LORD OF THE RINGS: TWO TOWERS
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 LOTR: TWO TOWERS / THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)

Reserve your seats by texting "SURESEATS G4 (or any Ayala Cinemas) and send to 2333
Or log on to www.sureseats.com
*GSC Guaranteed Seats Cinema

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING
EMAIL: mmta@asia.com

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
2 (SDDS) LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS) MANO PO
4 GOLD (DTS ES) HEAVEN
5 GOLD (DOLBY EX) LORD OF THE RING
6 GOLD (SDDS) HALF PAST DEAD
7 GOLD (DOLBY EX) HALF PAST DEAD
8 LASTIKMAN
9 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
10 DEKADA '70

Pearl Plaza Cinemas
(Parañaque) tel. 853.4486
1 LASTIKMAN
2 BANGKERO
3 (DTS) RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 (DTS) RESERVE
Golden Pearl THX RESERVE

Masagana CINEMA 1 2 & 3
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 LORD OF THE RING
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 KERIDA

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel 724.4986
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LASTIKMAN
3 BANGKERO
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) LORD OF THE RING
5 KERIDA

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 BANGKERO
4 LORD OF THE RING
5 KERIDA
6 HALF PAST DEAD

M star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas)
tel 873.5004
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 AGIMAT

PREMIERE CINEMA THX
(Makati City) tel 751.2010 to 13
LORD OF THE RING

Center Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 MANO PO
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

FCM FAIRVIEW CENTER MALL INC
tel 930.9515
1 RESERVE
2 KERIDA
3 BANGKERO

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LASTIKMAN
3 BANGKERO
4 RESERVE

GOTESCO CINEMA

Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588
1 (SDDS) LORD OF THE RING
4 KERIDA
5 MANO PO
6 BANGKERO
7 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
8 (SDDS) HALF PAST DEAD
9 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING

Gotesco Caloocan
tel 362.3508
2 RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 365.7928
1 KERIDA
2 LASTIKMAN
3 BANGKERO
4 (SDDS) HALF PAST DEAD
5 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
6 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
7 (DTS) LORD OF THE RING
8 MANO PO
9 DEKADA '70

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0082
1 BANGKERO
2 (SDDS) LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS) LORD OF THE RING
4 (DOLBY) HALF PAST DEAD
5 KERIDA

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795
1 BANGKERO
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS) LORD OF THE RING
4 KERIDA
5 (SDDS) LORD OF THE RING

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470
1 LORD OF THE RING

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 LORD OF THE RING

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724
Dilson KERIDA
Lords BANGKERO
Jennet RESERVE

MARKETPLACE Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LORD OF THE RING
3 BANGKERO
4 LASTIKMAN

Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
2 BANGKERO
3 LASTIKMAN
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 KERIDA

FRC Cinema
(Talaba Bacoor Cavite)
1 DEKADA '70
2

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KERIDA
2 HULA MO HULI KO

THE CENTER OF ENTERTAINMENT Araneta

MALL CINEPLEX 7
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400
1 LASTIKMAN
2 KERIDA
3 (DAILY DIGITAL) HALF PAST DEAD
4 (SDDS) LORD OF THE RINGS 2
5 (DTS) LORD OF THE RINGS 2
6 HEAVEN
7 MANO PO

FarmersPlaza CINEMAS
tel 911.3101 loc. 821.8242.8400
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LORD OF THE RINGS 2

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (049) 534.2185 , 534.2198
1 LASTIKMAN
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS) LORD OF THE RING

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 LASTIKMAN
2 (DTS) LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
4 HALF PAST DEAD

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 MANO PO
2 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
3 (DTS) HALF PAST DEAD
4 LASTIKMAN

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 LIKE MIKE
2 LASTIKMAN
3 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
4 RESERVE

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729
1 LASTIMAN
2 KERIDA
3 (DOLBY) LONG TIME DEAD
4 (DTS) SWIM FAN

Magic Star Cinema
(Tarlac City) tel (045) 611.4305
1 (DOLBY) LONG TIME DEAD
2 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
3 KERIDA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) HALF PAST DEAD
2 BANGKERO
3 (DTS) KERIDA
4 RESERVE

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) LORD OF THE RING
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 (DTS) LASTIKMAN
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
5 KERIDA

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Binan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 LORD OF THE RING
2 LASTIKMAN
3 KERIDA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558
1 LORD OF THE RING
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 LASTIKMAN

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283
1 BROTHER HOOD OF THE WOLF
2 LAPU LAPU
3 (DTS) MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4 LASTIKMAN

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808
1 (DTS) RESERVE
2 (DTS) RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657
1 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
2 LASTIKMAN
3 MASARAP NA PUCAD

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 LASTIKMAN
2 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT
3 MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4 REPLIKATE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) LORD OF THE RING
2 MAY BIG FAT BIG WEDDING
3 (DTS ES) HALF PAST DEAD
4 SPIRIT WARRIOR THE SHORT CUT

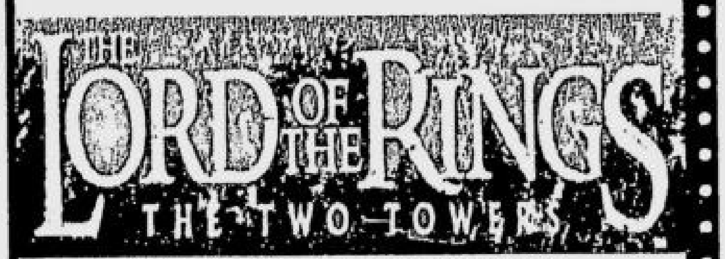
Cine Nepo Mall
(Angeles City) tel (045) 322-3571
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LORD OF THE RING
3 (DOLBY) HALF PAST DEAD
4 LORD OF THE RING

*Movies are subject to change without prior notice

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY dts SDDS

FESTIVAL CINEMA
Level 4
Festival Supermall
Filinvest - Alabang
Tel. 85035-71 to 72

BE THE FIRST TO WITNESS


THE LORD OF THE RINGS
THE TWO TOWERS

NOW SHOWING

SM CINEMA
SM Dial-A-Movie Tel. 833-9999
NOW SHOWING

SM CITY BACOOR
4173868
1 BANGKERO
2 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 DEKADA '70
5 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
6 LASTIKMAN
7 MANO PO
8 HALF PAST DEAD

SM CENTERPOINT
7149522 -7161416
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 KERIDA
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 BANGKERO
5 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
6 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
7 HALF PAST DEAD
8 HEAVEN
9 MANO PO
10 LASTIKMAN

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
9350749
1 HEAVEN
2 DEKADA '70
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
5 MANO PO
6 LASTIKMAN
7 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
8 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
9 HALF PAST DEAD
10 KERIDA
11 BANGKERO
12 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY MANILA
5239240
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 HEAVEN
4 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
5 RING (JAPANESE)
6 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
7 BANGKERO
8 LASTIKMAN
9 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
10 DEKADA '70
11 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
12 MANO PO

SM MEGAMALL
6331901 • 6329401
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
5 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
6 HEAVEN
7 MANO PO
8 KERIDA
9 LASTIKMAN
10 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
11 RING (JAPANESE)
12 BANGKERO

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9296452
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
3 MANO PO
4 RING
5 HEAVEN
6 HALF PAST DEAD
7 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
8 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS

SM SOUTHMALL
8066888
1 HEAVEN
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 LASTIKMAN
5 KERIDA
6 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
7 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
8 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
9 MANO PO
10 BANGKERO

SM CITY CEBU
2313876
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
3 REPLIKATE
4 LIKE MIKE
5 LASTIKMAN
6 UNFAIHTFUL CONCUBINE
7 MANO PO
8 HALF PAST DEAD

SM CITY ILOILO
3209422
1 VAMPS
2 CLOSED
3 SWIMFAN
4 MANO PO
5 BROTHERHOOD OF THE WOLF
6 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
7 CLOSED
8 LASTIKMAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
3 MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
4 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LASTIKMAN

SM SUPER CTR. SUCAT
8294975
1 LASTIKMAN
2 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
3 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
4 HALF PAST DEAD

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 BANGKERO
3 HALF PAST DEAD
4 LASTIKMAN

SM CITY DAVAO
2976998
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 SWIMFAN
3 MANO PO
4 CHARLOTTE GRAY
5 THE RING (HOLLYWOOD)
6 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS

SM BICUTAN
1 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS
2 HALF PAST DEAD
3 LASTIKMAN
4 LOTR 2: THE TWO TOWERS

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
1 THE RING
2 LIKE MIKE
3 REPLI-KATE
4 SPIRIT WARRIORS 2

THE PODIUM CINEMA
633-89

1 LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers
11:30 FS/12:00 MF/3:40/7:20/
10:30 LFS/11:00 LMF/2:10 END

2 LORD OF THE RINGS: The Two Towers
10:50 FS/11:20 MF/3:00/6:40
9:50 LFS/10:20 LMF/1:30 END

LATE NIGHT SCREENING DURING FRIDAYS AND SATURDAYS
Matinee : P100.00 - Screening until 5pm • Monday thru Friday
Regular Rate P120.00 - After 5pm • Saturday • Sunday • Holidays (Reserved Seating)

Movies are subject to change without prior notice

MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS
@ Robinsons Malls
call-a-movie: 536- 7812
NOW SHOWING

Galleria
632- 9115- 16
633- 7641 loc. 279
THX LORD OF THE RINGS II - 11:00 AM (MF); 2:30 PM; 6:00 PM; 9:30 PM (LMF)
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 HEAVEN
4 LORD OF THE RINGS II
5 THE RING US VERSION
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 RING JAPANESE VERSION
8 HALF PAST DEAD
9 DEKADA '70
10 MANO PO

MATINEE PRICE: P80 THX cinema : P65 1level cinemas
Mon.- Fri. / 10am- 4pm (EXCEPT HOLIDAYS)

Ermita
536 -7809- 12
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 THE RING US VERSION
3 HEAVEN
4 RING (JAPANESE VERSION)
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 LORD OF THE RINGS II

Metro East - Marcos hway
682- 8193 / 8280
1 HEAVEN
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 LORD OF THE RINGS II
4 THE RING US VERSION
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II
7 LORD OF THE RINGS II
8 LASTIKMAN

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 LASTIKMAN
4 HEAVEN
5 HALF PAST DEAD
6 MANO PO
7 THE RING US VERSION
8 SPIRIT WARRIORS

Malabon Citisquare
288-0985 / 288-2575
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 HALF PAST DEAD
4 LASTIKMAN

Star Mills- Sn. Fernando, Pamp.
875- 1927
961- 5318 / 5270
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
3 THE RING US VERSION
4 LASTIKMAN
5 LORD OF THE RINGS II
6 LORD OF THE RINGS II

Imus
471- 8188 / 875- 3838
1 LORD OF THE RINGS II
2 LASTIKMAN
3 LORD OF THE RINGS II
4 HALF PAST DEAD
5 BANGKERO
6 THE RING US VERSION

Sta. Rosa Laguna
1 HALF PAST DEAD
2 LORD OF THE RINGS II
3 THE RING US VERSION
4 MANO PO
5 LASTIKMAN

Bacolod
441- 0453 / 0459
1 THE RING US VERSION
2 REPLI-KATE
3 MANO PO
4 MY BIG FAT GREEK WEDDING
5 HULA MO HULI KO
6 DOUBLE SEDUCTION

Iloilo
336- 8077 - 78
1 THE RING US VERSION
2 SWIMFAN
3 VAMPS
4 LASTIKMAN
5 BROTHERHOOD OF WOLF
6 MANO PO

MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

Metro Manila Filmfest 2002 . . .

From page A29

seven days after the festival began, is the second most successful movie in terms of box-office ranking. Aside from bagging the third best picture award, the movie earned P39,941,856.68 at the tills.

The sequel of "Spirit Warriors," shown during the 2000 Metro Manila Film Festival, only had the Streeboys to draw in the crowd.

"Spirit Warriors" was the top filmfest moneymaker two years ago.

The combined efforts of Star for All Seasons Vilma Santos and drama king Christopher de Leon failed to lift "Dekada '70" from its initial No. 5 standing on the box-office list.

The Chito Roño period drama, did not move from the fifth place since the start of the festival, despite heavy promo blitz provided by producer Star Cinema and its sister company ABS-CBN.

"Dekada '70" earned only a total of P37,945,673.25.

"Home Alone da Riber," a film spawned from the long-running ABS-CBN sitcom of comedy king Dolphy, "Home Along da Riles," came in sixth at P28,143,340.90. The movie ranked fourth when it opened last Dec. 25.

FPJ Production's "Alamat ng Lawin" fell five steps down from the No. 2 spot. Despite the crowd-drawing power of action king Fernando Poe Jr., the movie was at the No. 7 spot and earned a disappointing P20,453,252.95.

The PG-13 rating of Reflection Films' "Hula Mo Huli Ko" kept children 13 years old and below from appreciating the movie. The Rudy Fernandez flick landed on the eighth spot with earnings of P10,334,808.45.

Calauan Cine Works' "Lapu Lapu," which was criticized for its poor presentation of the life of the Cebuano hero (portrayed by Lito Lapid), came in last with P5,686,715.90 from the box office.

THEATRE MALL
GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX
NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 1
LORD OF THE RINGS 2
11:00 , 2:40 , 6:20 , 10:00
GP

CINEMA 2
HALF PAST DEAD
12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:40
P13

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA • 7224496

MUSIC MUSEUM
JAN 16, 2003 PARLIAMENT SYNDICATE 9:00 PM
JAN 17, 2003 BANDS 8:00 PM
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POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City
☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HALF PAST DEAD P13 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 1:10,4:50, 8:30	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 10:30, 2:00, 5:40, 9:20
HEAVEN R18 12:30, 2:45, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 12:20, 4:00 SNEAK PREVIEW THE RING	LORD OF THE RINGS "TWO TOWERS" GP 11:30, 3:10, 6:50, 10:30

MATINEE P80.00 - FREE SEATING - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5 PM • MON. TO FRI.

SUSMARYOSEP... THE ORIGINAL IS BACK!

DUE TO INSISTENT DEMAND BY THE HORRIFIED PUBLIC... THE ORIGINAL JAPANESE FILM THAT STARTED THE "FEAR FEVER" IN METRO MANILA IS NOW ON ITS RETURN ENGAGEMENT AT SM MEGAMALL SM MANILA SM NORT GLORIETTA-4 GREENBELT ROBINSON GALLERIA ROBINSON ERMITA

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
Experience Fear Worse Than Nightmare!!!
Ring
Circle of Evil
"There's a video. If you see it you have to show it to someone else. After seven days... you die!

Araneta Center

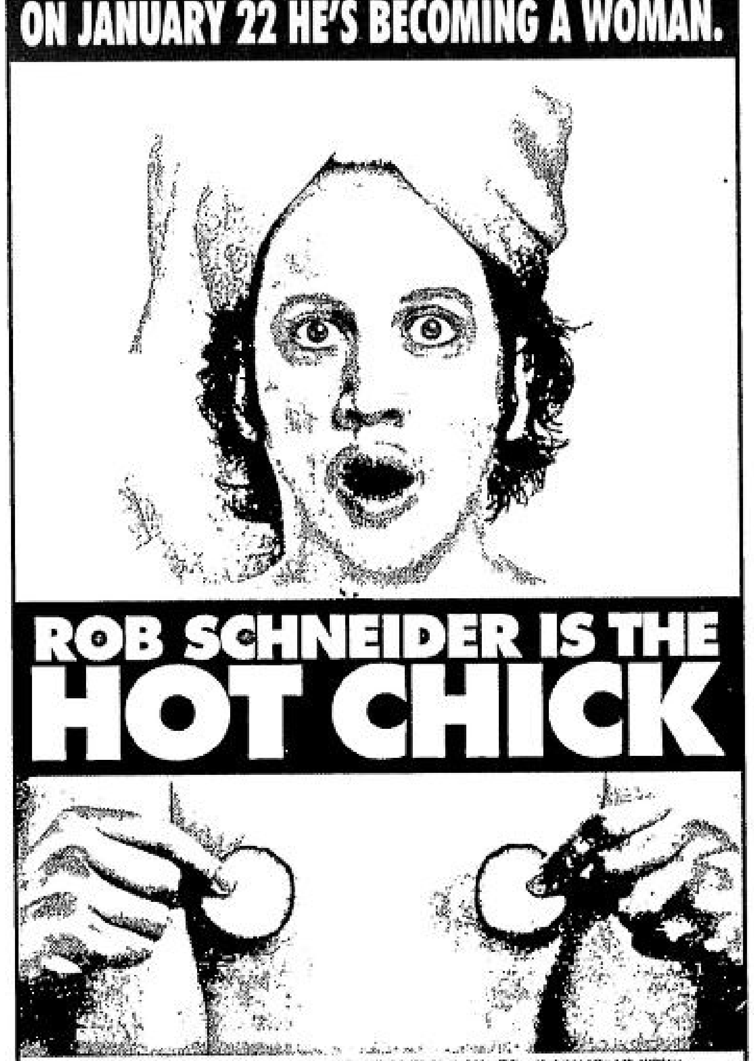
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7	
Ali 1	LASTIKMAN
Ali 2	KERIDA
Ali 3	HALF PAST DEAD
Ali 4	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 5	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
Ali 6	HEAVEN
Ali 7	MANO PO
FARMERS PLAZA CINEMAS	
Farmers 1	HALF PAST DEAD
Farmers 2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
ARANETA COLISEUM	
JAN 15	NCA 7 COCK DERBY
JAN 21, 22, & 24	WORLD SLASHER CUP 2003
FEB 15	ABBA TRIBUTE
ELEPHANT WORLD	
JAN. 15	3 PM
JAN. 16	10 AM / 3 PM
JAN 17	10 AM / 3 PM / 5 PM

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	MASARAP NA PUGAD / SEX LOVE
ODEON	HALF PAST DEAD
ODEON-2	PAMASAK BUTAS / EVANGELINE 14
ROBEN	KERIDA
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	RAIN OF FIRE / THE TOUCH
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
QUEZON-1	KERIDA
REMAR	HALF PAST DEAD
REMAR-2	KERIDA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
B	HULA MO, HULI KO
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-2	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BANGKERO
CINEMA-2	KERIDA
CINEMA-3	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	DEKADA '70
CINEMA-6	SPIRIT WARRIORS 2
CINEMA-7	MANO PO
CINEMA-8	LASTIKMAN
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	HALF PAST DEAD
CINEMA-12	LORD OF THE RINGS 2
CINEMA-14	HEAVEN
CINEMA-15	RING
LORES	
CINEMA-2	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN	
CINEMA 1	DIE ANOTHER DAY
CINEMA 2	BAHID
CINEMA 3	HARRY POTTER
CINEMA 4	CHANGING [illegible]
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARAÑAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
CINEMA-1	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

HE'S HALF-PINOY, HILARIOUS, AND THE HOTTEST CHICK IN TOWN !
OPENS JANUARY 22
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
FIRST, HE BECAME A GIGOLO.
ON JANUARY 22 HE'S BECOMING A WOMAN.

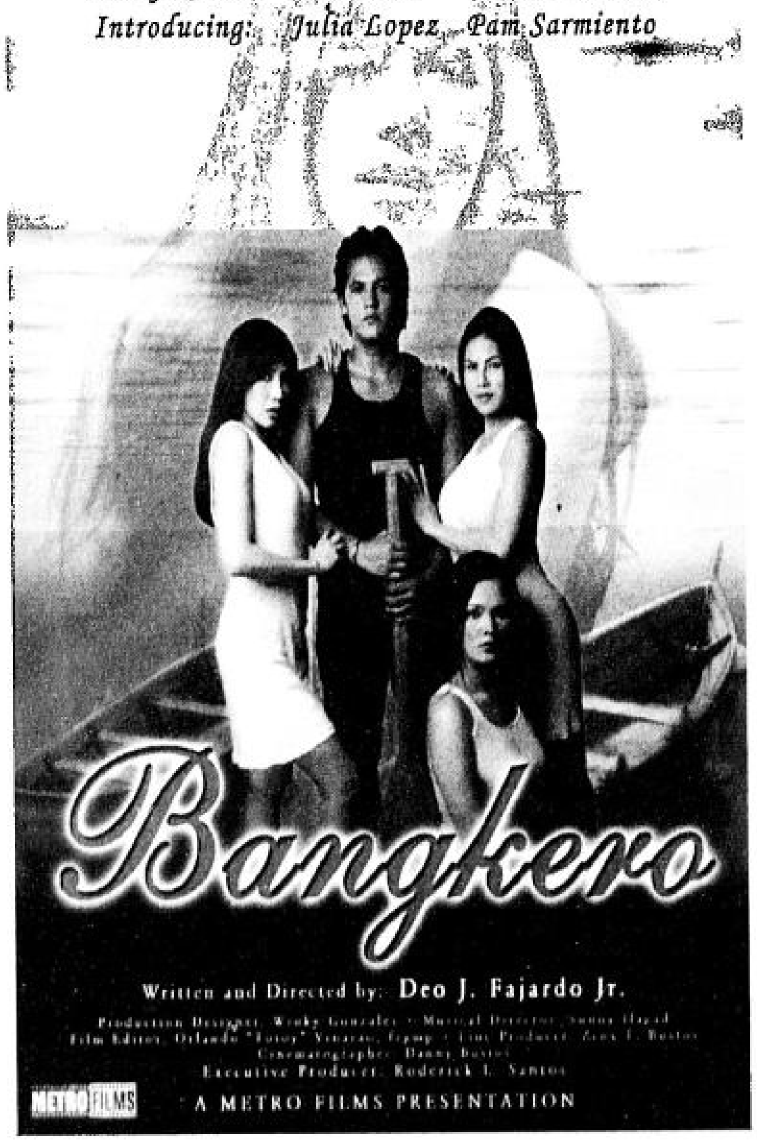

ROB SCHNEIDER IS THE HOT CHICK
SOUNDTRACK AVAILABLE ON HOLLYWOOD RECORDS
DOLBY DIGITAL
SDDS
Touchstone Pictures

Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED Parents are strongly warned against bringing children below 13. Some scenes can offend them.
OPEN JAN 22, WED!

Elijah Wood
Mandy Moore
Franka Potente
Try Seventeen
PENSHOPPE
SOLAR
SOLAR SPORTS
A SOLAR FILMS RELEASE

OPENS TODAY


Michael Rivero
Jenine Desiderio
Daniel Fernando
Julio Diaz
Mon Confiado
Danny Ramos
Stella L
Carla Morena
Introducing: Julia Lopez
Pam Sarmiento
Bangkero
Written and Directed by: Deo J. Fajardo Jr.
METRO FILMS

A METRO FILMS PRESENTATION

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Parents are strongly cautioned not to bring children below 13 years old to watch this movie.
THE NO.1 FILM THAT RANG UP US$130 MILLION IN THE BOX OFFICE IS NOW HERE!
DREAMWORKS PICTURES

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THE RING
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SNEAK PREVIEWS TODAY
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Dero Pedero holds empowering seminars

LIFE-ENHANCE coach Dero Pedero holds two empowering show-seminars designed to help increase prosperity and attain personal success.

The exclusive sessions aim to provide the boost needed to ride the crest of the wave confidently through these rough times.

"Make Your Impossible Dreams Come True," an entertaining multi-media presentation, reveals the universal principles, secret formulas and strategies to help one achieve success and fulfillment in life. Fun and uplifting, this seminar uses music, video clips, and computer technology all seamlessly integrated into one, fast-paced production.

PEDERO

"Money, Money! Secret Principles of Money and Prosperity" is a highly motivating and enlightening course founded on the principle that the more you know about money, the easier and faster you can get rich.

Learn the universal principles, secret formulas and techniques of prosperity earning, saving and investing that can help you attract more wealth and prosperity into your life.

Pedero is a multi-awarded music composer, book author and lifestyle columnist. He attended the sellout seminars of new millennium guru Iyanla Vanzant, media magnate Steve Scott, entrepreneurial expert Barbara J. Winter and promotions genius Carol Sapin Gold in New York.

Pedero also attended the highly acclaimed lecture-forums of Arista Records president Clive Davis, top Hollywood agent Jay Bernstein and creativity specialist Sark in Los Angeles.

Pedero's best-selling book is "Jewels for the Mind" and soon to be released is his second publication, "Living Alive."

The Dreams seminar will be held Jan. 18 at 2 p.m., while the Money seminar will be on Jan. 25, 2 p.m. Venue is at the roof deck of Buendia Tower, 501 Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. between Taft Avenue and Bautista. Seating is limited; registration is required.

For information, e-mail Dero-Seminar@yahoo.com or call/text 0920-4053233.

"SHOWGIRLS." Sexy stars (from left) Angela Velez, Diana Zubiri and Jenny Miller in a dance revue.

Verni sings at Merk's

SHOWS

MERK'S Bar Bistro offers hot music to warm cold January nights.

Silk and Steel takes over the slots for Jan. 20 (with Mon Espia) and 27.

Acoustic Jive will be the main attraction on Tuesday nights, Jan. 21 and 28.

Richard Merk and Friends perform Wednesdays for the much sought-after "Jazz Nights," with special guest Eileen Sison.

Jazz enthusiasts will have a treat Jan. 29, when "Verni Varga@Merk's: A Jazz and Groove Series" takes off with a bang.

Thursday nights will feature a special series "Up Close and Intimate with John Lesaca."

Mae Romero will play during the happy hours of Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays.

Experience a "Double Treat Show and Dance," with the Soul'd Out Band and ROB on Fridays, Jan. 17 and 24.

Saturdays are exciting with the Latin wave of Mai Castro and Onda Latina Band.

Call 757-4720 or 757-4721 for reservations.

'Showgirls'

THE CAST of the sexy dance revue, "Showgirls," hits the road to Pampanga on Jan. 18, 9 p.m., after its premiere show held last year at the Casino Filipino in Parañaque.

"Showgirls" will feature eight of the sexiest stars in local showbiz namely Angela Velez, Geneva Cruz, Regine Tolentino, Jenny Miller, Maricar de Mesa, Klaudia Koronel, Katya Santos and Diana Zubiri.

The gyrating bombshells in their most revealing costumes, will perform especially-choreographed production numbers inspired by past and present pop icons such as Madonna, Cher, Janet Jackson, Britney Spears, Christina Aguilera, Gloria Estefan and Jennifer Lopez.

Joining "Showgirls" are equally talented female guest performers Selina Sevilla, Angela Bovis and Ethel Booba, with Whiplash and Groove Manila as dancers.

"Showgirls" is mounted by Live Artists Production. For ticket inquiries, call Live Artists Production at 920-2643 or 0918922-1542 or Casino Filipino-Mimosa at (045) 5996020.

Maurice ...

From page A29

prove themselves.

"We just love doing what we're doing. I guess that's the passion and love we have for so many years," he said.

Maurice considered it a great compliment that other artists such as **Barbra Streisand, Diana Ross, Tina Turner, George Michael,** Boyzone, N'Sync and Destiny's Child have recorded cover versions of their songs. He singled out Boyzone's take on "Words" and even commented that **Ronan Keating** "is a really nice guy."

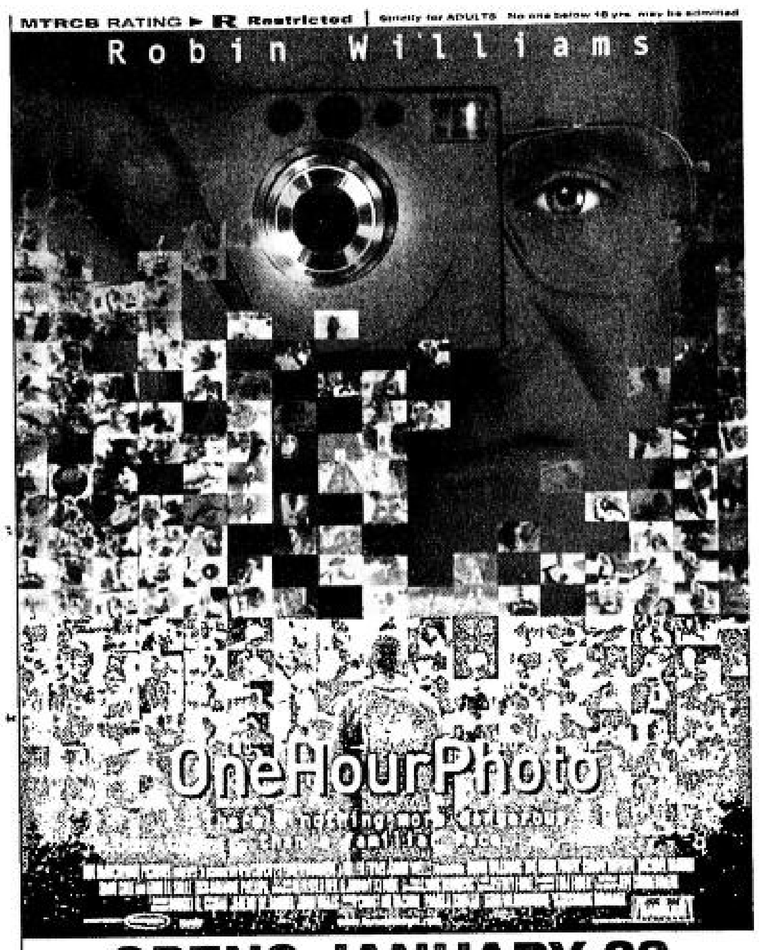
This also accounts for the multi-generational appeal enjoyed by the group. Their fans in the '60s have stayed with them up to the present. Younger people also became more aware of their music because of the revivals.

"When you see kids or adults watching your show and loving your music, that's an overwhelming feeling," Maurice said.

Among the hits of the Bee Gees, Maurice particularly liked the ballads—"Too Much Heaven" and "How Deep is Your Love."

Asked how he would like to be remembered, as songwriter or performer, Maurice replied, "We'd love to be known for the songs because without the songs, we can't record or perform. It's just wonderful to continue to receive the respect we've gotten over the years. We count our blessings every morning."

Maurice, who was previously married to British pop singer **Lulu,** is survived by his second wife, **Yvonne,** and their two children, **Adam** and **Samantha** who are in their 20s.


MTRCB RATING ▶ R Restricted | Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted

OPENS JANUARY 22

OPENS JANUARY 22
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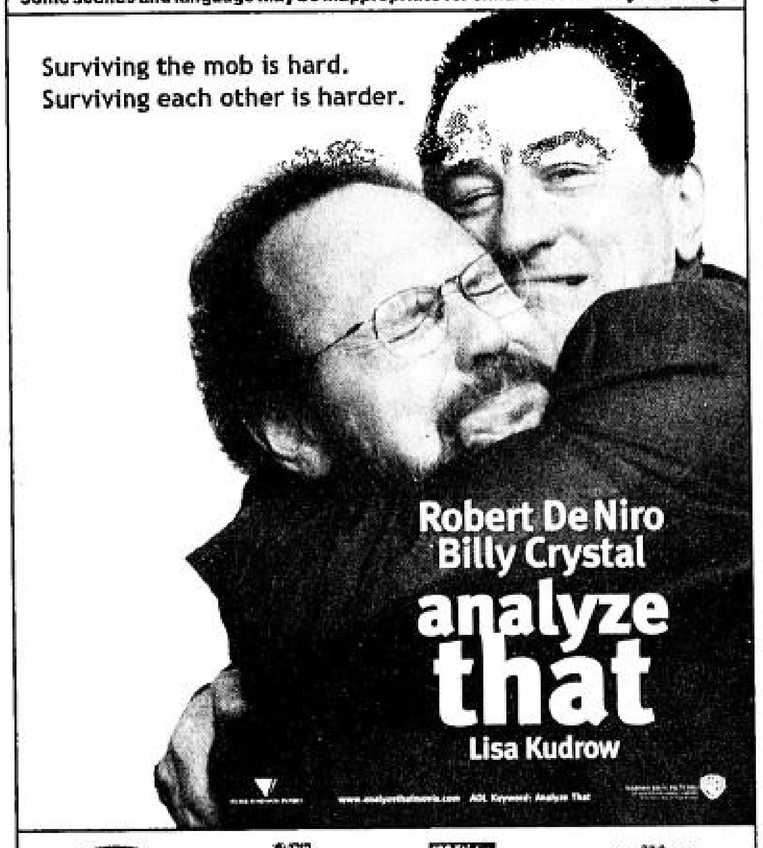
PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED.
Some scenes and language may be inappropriate for children below 13 years of age.


Surviving the mob is hard.
Surviving each other is harder.
Robert De Niro
Billy Crystal
analyze that
Lisa Kudrow

FREE TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS
WIN A FREE TRIP FOR TWO TO NEW ZEALAND AT AYALA CINEMAS WHEN YOU WATCH
THE LORD OF THE RINGS
EXPLORE THE WORLD OF MIDDLE EARTH
A JOURNEY TO NEW ZEALAND
SEE POSTERS AND LEAFLETS FOR MORE DETAILS.
Promo runs from Jan 11 to Feb 9, 2003.
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0102. Series of 2003.
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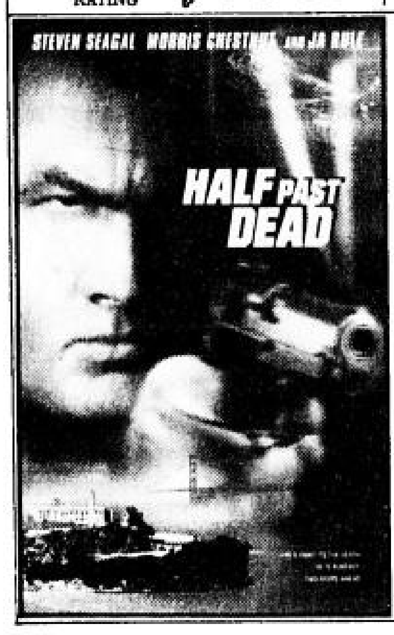

STEVEN SEAGAL MORRIS CHESTNUT AND JA RULE
HALF PAST DEAD
Special New Year Presentation!

Steven Seagal back in Action

International action superstar Steven Seagal is back with a vengeance. This time he plays undercover FBI agent Sascha Petrosevitch in the brand-new non-stop, slam-bang action blockbuster from Columbia Pictures, "Half Past Dead."

The California Penal Authority has reopened Alcatraz, the most notorious prison in history. A disgruntled prison bureaucrat-turned-criminal mastermind heads a renegade commando team to infiltrate the high-tech fortress in order to force a death-row inmate to reveal the whereabouts of $200 million worth of gold.

Seagal teams with rap artist Ja Rule to rally the Alcatraz inmates to stop the invaders – before they murder the Supreme Court Justice, who is in The Rock to witness an execution.

The fast-paced, action-packed thriller also stars sexy Filipino Hollywood actress Nia Peeples as a deadly gun-firing, knife-throwin;; martial artist.

NOW SHOWING

AYALA CINEMAS
OPENS JAN. 22 only at
ArtFilm Greenbelt 1

Off Key, aka Desafinado, is a Spanish comedy made in English featuring an international cast.

It is the story of three operatic tenors who performed all over the world together, until a disastrous performance in Mexico City, where they split for good. Now, they are getting together at the French Villa for the wedding of one of the three tenors to the daughter of another. To further complicate things, the bride's mother is married to the third trio member now. The father of the bride, who has fallen on hard times, hires a hooker to accompany him, and to help with his plot to reunite the trio as performers. The groom-to-be has a son, who isn't really his, and who secretly has the hots for the bride's mother.

Starring:
Danny Aiello, George Hamilton, Joe Mantegna
Anna Galiena & Ariadna Gil

OFFKEY
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13
SKYFILMS NOKIA INQUIRER

Onstage GREENBELT
Starmax International
PRESENTS
Jose Mari Chan
The Heart of a Songwriter
January 17 & 18, 2003, 9PM
ONSTAGE THEATER, GREENBELT 1
Tickets at P1,200 / P1,000 / P600
& available at National Book Store branches, Robinson's (Malate & Galleria), Tower Records (Makati & Alabang), Music Museum (Greenhills), Ayala Center Greenbelt 1 Ticket Booth, Glorietta 1 Ticket Booth or call 891-5610 / 635-0473 / 631-6944
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SM CINEMA
SPECIAL SNEAK PREVIEW
January 15 & 16, 2003
MTRCB RATING: PG 13
Tickets available at:
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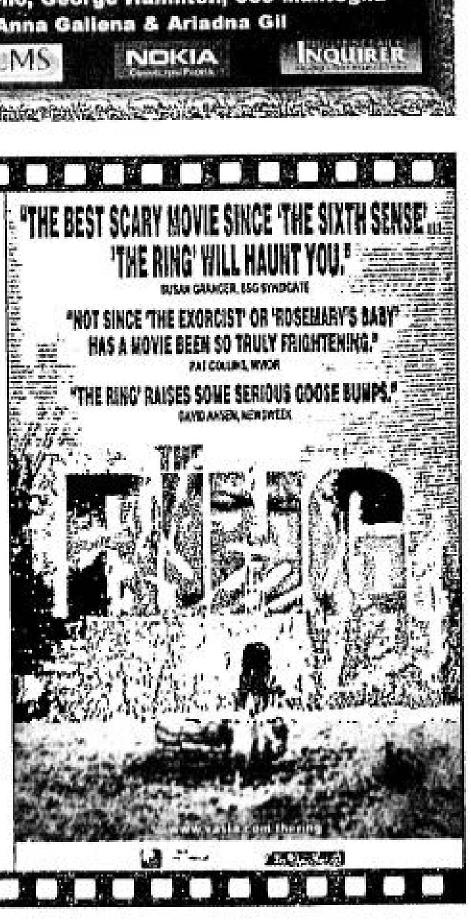
• FAIRVIEW • SOUTHMALL • BACOOR • SUCAT
For screening schedule, dial 833 9999


"THE BEST SCARY MOVIE SINCE 'THE SIXTH SENSE'... 'THE RING' WILL HAUNT YOU."
SUSAN GRANGER, SSG SYNDICATE
"NOT SINCE 'THE EXORCIST' OR 'ROSEMARY'S BABY' HAS A MOVIE BEEN SO TRULY FRIGHTENING."
PAT COLLINS, WWOR
"'THE RING' RAISES SOME SERIOUS GOOSE BUMPS."
DAVID ANSEN, NEWSWEEK
THE RING

SEE IT FIRST!
SM CINEMA
ADVANCE SCREENING
INVITATIONAL DWLL MELLOW TOUCH PREMIERE
on January 15, 2003 • 7:30 pm
SM MEGAMALL CINEMA 1
MTRCB RATING: R18
Regular Showing on January 22, 2003 at the SM CINEMAS
Simultaneously shown at
SM Pampanga

ROB SCHNEIDER IS THE HOT CHICK

E-mail: pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

MULTI-GENERATIONAL APPEAL. The Bee Gees (from left) Maurice, Robin and Barry Gibb. AFP

Maurice likes to be remembered for the (Bee Gees) songs

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

A TEXT message from INQUIRER Sports editor **Al S. Mendoza** Monday morning made me a bit nostalgic.

"Please tell **Ricky Lo** that **Maurice Gibb** of the Bee Gees is dead. *Idol niya 'yun, pareho ko.*"

Maurice—who was one third of the popular Bee Gees trio of brothers Gibb, with **Barry** and **Robin**—died Sunday morning in Miami, Florida after an abdominal surgery. He was only 53.

In May 2001, Philippine Star's Ricky Lo and I interviewed Maurice in Hong Kong for the worldwide release of the Bee Gees' album, "This Is Where I Came In," distributed locally by MCA-Universal.

Maurice was then doing his share for the global promo blitz of the album, which was hyped in the United States, Europe and all over Asia.

In 1999, I was also in Sydney, Australia where the Bee Gees did a homecoming concert at the new Olympic Stadium in Homebush Bay, site of the Games in the Year 2000. Tickets were on sale six months before the concert.

Australia was the country which the brothers Gibb called home during their teenage years.

One night only

The Bee Gees is perhaps the only Australian group to hit it big in the US and internationally. They remain the fifth best-selling recording artist of all time, after **Elvis Presley**, The Beatles, **Michael Jackson** and **Paul McCartney**.

That same year, the Bee Gees released an album, "One Night Only," which celebrates 30 years of their illustrious career. The CD contains smash hits like "To Love Somebody," "Words," "Stayin' Alive," "I Started a Joke" and "How Deep Is Your Love," plus tracks previously unreleased by the group.

Their name was given by **Bill Gates**, not the Microsoft magnate but the deejay in Manchester, England, where Barry, Robin and Maurice started their singing career in the '60s.

Maurice, up close and personal, was a low-key celebrity with hardly any star complex. Garbed in an all-black leather get-up and with his trademark black hat, he entered a hotel penthouse full of Asian journalists and easily made everyone feel at ease with his presence.

Despite his status as an international music superstar, Maurice was amiable and friendly. He started to shake everybody's hand and didn't mind going around the room and being introduced to all the journalists, whose names he certainly wouldn't even remember.

My generation of thirty-something grew up with the hits of the Bee Gees. I will always associate them with **John Travolta**, who became a superstar with "Saturday Night Fever." The film's soundtrack album was recorded by the Bee Gees in 1977. The falsetto-laden tracks like "Stayin' Alive," "Night Fever" and "How Deep Is Your Love" gave the trio pop immortality.

Acoustic sounds

However, with "This Is Where I Came In," the Bee Gees returned to the acoustic sounds and three-part harmonies of their earlier years in the business.

It was a conscious effort, according to Maurice, to ditch the falsetto voices.

UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL. The writer with Maurice Gibb in Hong Kong two years ago.

"Barry was tired of it," Maurice said in the interview in Hong Kong. "He is the falsetto expert and I simply took the high harmonies in our concerts. You have to remember that during the Stylistics period of the '60s, everyone sang in falsetto—**Frankie Valli**, the Beach Boys."

"This Is Where I Came In" marks a return to the Bee Gees' rock, soul and ballad roots. The trio recorded many of the vocals standing around a single mike, like when they first started in the '60s.

"We just wanted to get back to where we were when we first made our debut album, 'Bee Gees First'," Maurice said. "We've sort of come back to square one again. After all, the millennium represents all the music of the '60s, '70s, '80s and '90s."

All the new 14 tracks on the album were written by the brothers. "This Is Where I Came In" was recorded in the Bee Gees' Middle Ear Studios in Miami, Florida, where they are all based.

One song, "On Your Wedding Day," was used during the May 28, 2001 altar date of local show biz couple **Aga Muhlach** and **Charlene Gonzales** in Baguio City.

Beatles guitar

In the title track, "This Is Where I Came In," Maurice used a Beatles guitar, an acoustic Gibson Monarch.

"Years ago, what I got for my 21st birthday was a movie camera from **Ringo Starr**, a guitar from **George Harrison** and a Monarch guitar from **John Lennon**," he said.

"When The Beatles stopped touring in the '60s, we ended up with some of their equipment which also went away eventually."

A Reuters' obituary on Maurice stated all three Bee Gees moved to the Miami area in the '70s and they all lived on the same street until last year, when Maurice bought a $7.2 million waterfront house with 13 bedrooms. He owned a local paintball shop, Commander Mo's.

During the interview in Hong Kong, Maurice was honest and candid. No wonder he was tagged as the most outgoing member of the Bee Gees. He shared a part of himself and gave insights on his life, career, his relationship with his brothers and the way he wrote his music. He even touched on his battle with alcohol, but without any details. He also got hooked on cocaine, but sobered up in the early '90s.

"We did Wembley Stadium in England with 75,000 people with no support act," he recalled. "We did the same thing in Johannesburg and Buenos Aires, and each time, before I walked onstage, I always told myself, 'Thank God, I'm sober'."

On sibling rivalry, Maurice owned up to having creative arguments with his brothers, especially when they were younger "when the ego got a bit larger than life and people started telling you things like 'Oh, you don't need the others.' Then women came into your life and told you, 'You shouldn't be with him'."

Maurice revealed there was a time he didn't speak with Barry for 15 months in 1970. They came back together on the day they recorded "Lonely Days" and "How Can You Mend A Broken Heart." The two songs both became No. 1 in the US.

Soundtrack

Barry remains prominent in the international music scene, especially when the soundtrack of "Saturday Night Fever" was recently revived as a successful West End musical, two decades after it became a movie hit.

After the Bee Gees chalked up enviable honors like seven Grammy awards, countless hits and more than 100 million in record sales, Maurice felt they no longer have to

MAURICE/ A28

Metro Manila Filmfest 2002 most successful in box office results

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE RECENT Metro Manila Film Festival Philippines (MMFFP) was by far the most successful in terms of box office results in its 28-year history.

The 14-day filmfest earned a total of P314,732,112.68.

Caloocan City Mayor Rey Malonzo, who is also the festival executive committee chair, announced Monday the ranking of the nine official movie entries, which were shown from Dec. 25 to Jan. 10.

Two entries, however—OctoArts Films' "Lastikman" and MaQ Productions' "Spirit Warriors"—started their regular theater run on Jan. 1.

Regal Films' cross-cultural drama "Mano Po," topped the filmfest money-makers list, with a whopping box-office take of P67,220,645.40.

The film was a poor fourth placer when the festival opened on Christmas Day, but rose to the top after winning the most number of awards including best picture during the "Gabi ng Parangal" last Dec. 27.

OctoArts Films' "Lastikman" surpassed all expectations by finishing at the No. 2 spot, even when it only opened on Jan. 1. The movie flick starring Vic Sotto earned a total of P59,107,245.90 with only 10 days of screening.

While there was talk that the Vic Sotto starrer benefited most from the controversies that hounded the film festival, movie analysts believed that "Lastikman" owes its success to publicity trailers that thrilled the audience of GMA 7's long-running noontime show "Eat Bulaga," co-hosted by Sotto.

Imus Productions' fantasy-adventure, "Agimat ni Lolo," was the festival's initial top grosser but ended up as the third placer with P46, 528,274.28.

The movie boasts of a Dolby Digital 5.1 recording and is reminiscent of the astonishing special effects seen in Hollywood fantasy movies like "The Mummy," "Lord of the Rings" and "Harry Potter."

MaQ Productions' "Spirit Warriors: The Short Cut," which was also shown

METRO/ A27

Established stars' sons make their bid

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

A GENERALLY unheralded side activity of the recent 2002 Metro filmfest was its established stars' earnest effort to provide good career-launching showcases for their sons and heirs.

Thus, "Agimat" is supposed to top-bill action star **Bong Revilla**, but the majority of its scenes feature his 14-year-old son, **Jolo Revilla**, as the fantasy-action film's teen protagonist.

And in, "Lastikman," **Vic Sotto**'s lead character is played in his youth by Vic and **Dina Bonnevie**'s son, **Oyo Boy**.

Of course, there's also **Dolphy** and the sons he fields in "Home Alone da Riber," but the multiple exposures mean there's no clear focus on any scion there, for build-up purposes.

And **Rudy Fernandez** has a good actor in his son, **Mark Anthony**, but Mark is still coping with personal problems and has put his acting career on hold, so he wasn't in entry, "Hula Mo, Huli Ko."

We also hear that **Lito Lapid** has a tall and handsome son, but he's in the states and doesn't seem to be all that interested in acting, so he isn't showcased in "Lapu Lapu."

Therefore, the filmfest's key sons and heirs are Oyo Boy Sotto and Jolo Revilla. How well do they do in their respective showcases, courtesy of their respective actor-producer-dads?

In "Agimat," Jolo proves himself to be an earnest performer who doesn't balk at doing action and emotional scenes, but it's clear that, at 14 year of age, he isn't all that ready yet for young stardom.

It's entirely possible that he can get his act together in the next few years, and emerge as a worthy heir to the senior Revillas. At the moment, however, he has to worry about his tendency to frown and get too intense during emotional sequences.

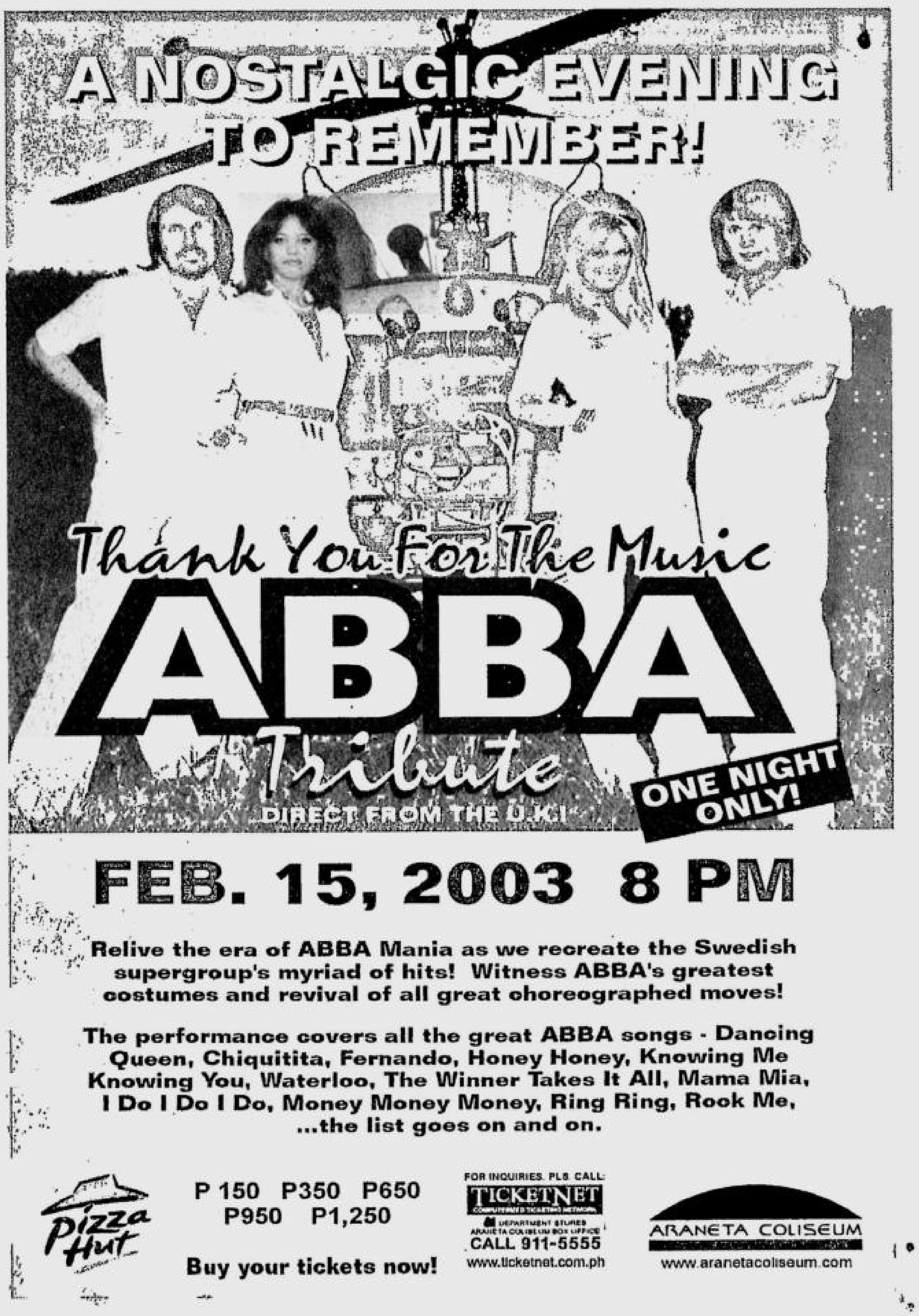
Also, next time around that he plays a young protagonist, he should be given more to do in terms of action and fight scenes. His model in this instance should be **Fernando Poe, Jr.** like Jolo, FPJ was only 14 years old when he played the title role in "Anak ni Palaris" after his father's sudden demise in the 1950s. but the young FPJ was given a lot to do in his launching film, and quickly established himself as the new young action star to watch.

True enough, FPJ's career as action star has lasted to this day - stellar longevity unmatched in the field of action movies.

As for Oyo Boy, he comes across as well in "Lastikman." His role is no great shakes, but he makes it interesting with his combination of sincerity as an actor and a witty, comic touch that he must have imbibed from Vic.

An advantage that Oyo Boy has over his dad is the fact that he's good-looking enough to play romantic-lead roles, so that widens his choices as an actor considerably. Perhaps, at this early stage of his film career, he'll do best in teen romantic-comedies, but he may in time be able to graduate to young-adult dramatic roles.

One thing he needs to do, though, as soon as possible: drop the Boy from his screen name. It will limit him to much, especially when he gets to his 20s.



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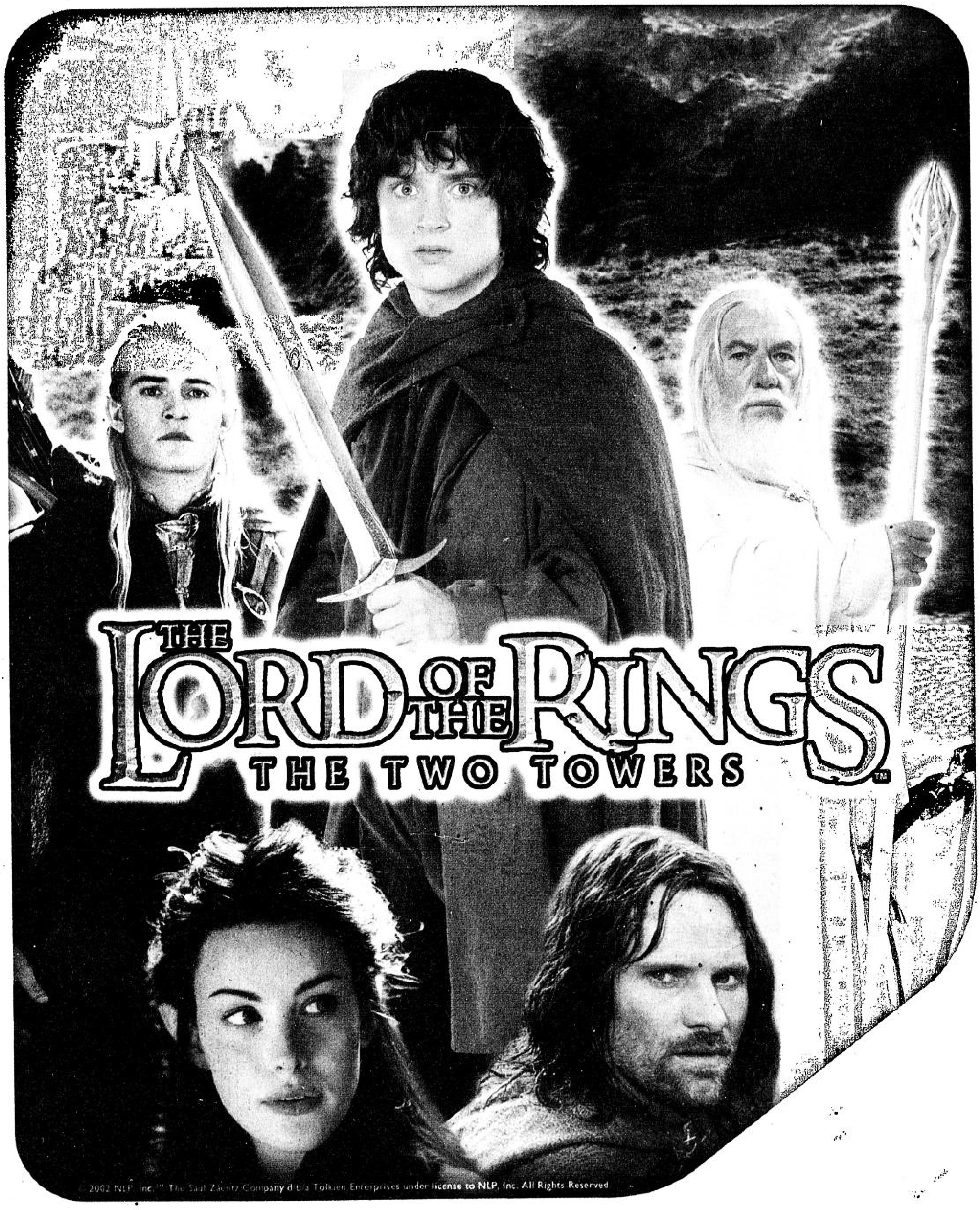
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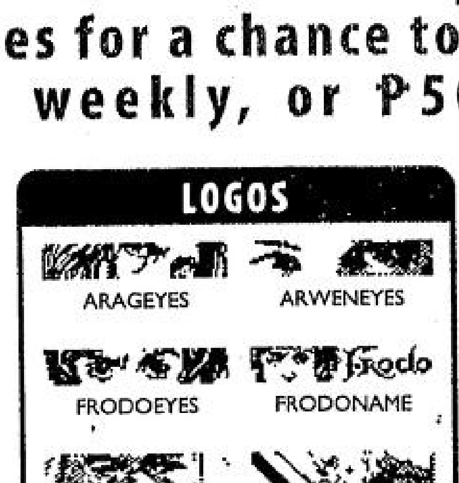
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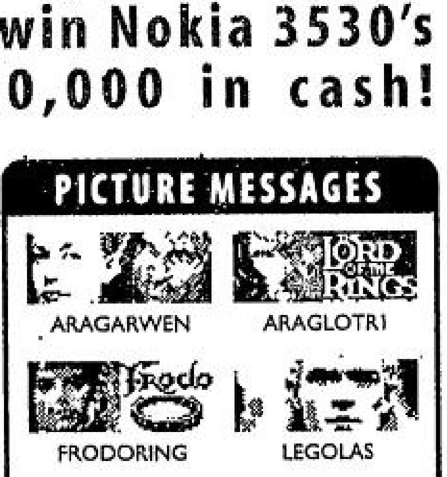
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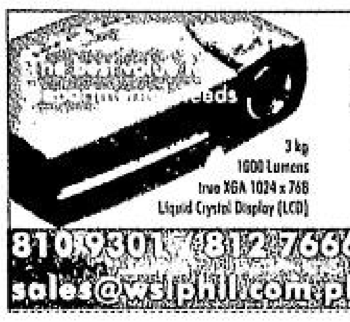

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Short-term investments up 194% in '02

By Clarissa S. Batino

NET portfolio investments grew 194 percent last year to $202 million from $68.7 million in 2002 due to an increased appetite for government securities that paid an interest rate much higher than offshore rates.

Documents from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that inbound funds in 2002 reached $1.27 billion, up by $39.5 million or 3.2 percent from $1.23 billion in 2001 while hot money that left the country declined by 8.06 percent or $93.8 million to $1.07 billion from $1.16 billion in end-2001.

This year, the BSP expects portfolio investors to commit more funds to the local market as the Macapagal administration strives to boost investor confidence.

Foreign portfolio funds are normally put in the stock market, government securities, mutual funds and insurance papers.

The benchmark 91-day treasury bill rate stood at 5.121 percent last Monday and the yield on this paper is more than three percentage points higher than comparative treasuries in the United States.

Analysts said some foreign funds also trickled back to the local equities market last year to look for selected bargains.

The central bank credited the encouraging inflow of portfolio funds last year for helping boost the country's balance of payments, an economic indicator based on movements in trade, investment and borrowings.

Portfolio investments in 2002 were not as erratic as the previous years, according to the central bank, even as the nature of hot money was normally fleeting and largely-sentiment driven.

In 2000, portfolio investments recorded a net outflow of $149 million as hot money investors feared the adverse impact of the juetengate scandal that erupted in October.

The central bank data come from Citibank N.A., Standard & Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank, HSBC, and ING Barings. These five foreign banks account for 95 percent of total foreign fund flows in the country.

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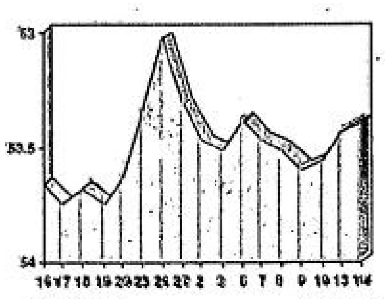

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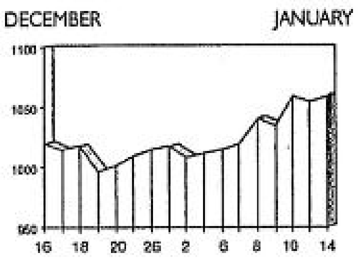

(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended marginally higher in thin trade yesterday as bargain hunters took advantage of the generally positive sentiment to pick up cheap blue chips.

Traders said the positive mood has persisted helped by President Macapagal-Arroyo's speech at the Philippine stock exchange last week that her administration would work to revitalize the economy.

However, the market may be rangebound in the coming sessions as investors look for more signs, particularly from corporate earnings, to support a continued bullish stance in local stocks.

The Philippine stock index climbed 6.28 points or 0.6 percent to end at 1,061.33 points, the day's highest level.

The index is now up 4.21 percent so far this year.

"The bias is still positive. People are still optimistic since the start of the year," said Mark Canizares, an analyst at Citisecurities Inc.

"The President gave strong comments that her administration is resolved to turn around the economy, and the mood has been positive." However, turnover slowed to P200.8 million from P347.7 million on Monday. Gainers were in a two-to-one majority.

Canizares said there was some indecision among investors on which direction to take the market given the possible war in Iraq and the growing anxiety over North Korea's nuclear ambitions.

The market's 4.6-percent gain last week was also tempting for short-term players in the market.

"Aside from Iraq, there is the question of North Korea, which is closer to home," he said.

"There's still some buying momentum especially on PLDT (Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.) and property companies like Ayala Land Inc., SM Prime and Filinvest Land," said Manny Cruz of Belson Securities Inc.

Reuters

SEC WARNS PUBLIC

No deal with Multitel

BAUTISTA

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission yesterday warned the public against believing the statements of accused pseudo-investment firm Multitel that a deal with the government agency was being worked out.

"There is no truth in the allegations being spread by Multitel spokesperson/s that there are 'direct negotiations going on with the SEC chairpersons' office' and that these 'negotiations are going well.'"

The SEC urged all those who wish to file criminal and civil actions against Multitel and the group's principals to proceed with the filing.

The SEC last November filed with the Makati prosecutor's office, criminal cases against Multitel International Holdings Inc., Multitel chair Rosario Baladjay, Saturnino Baldjay et al for fraud and violation of the country's Securities Regulation Code.

The SEC said that the cases have been submitted for resolution last Dec. 17.

The SEC has also filed a criminal case before the Makati fiscal's office against Multitel conduit, Everflow Group of Companies.

The corporate watchdog plans to file more criminal cases against Multitel conduits until all major conduits have been charged.

The SEC has argued that the Multitel group has been engaged in the operation of a Ponzi scheme that has victimized thousands of investors out of as much as P20 billion.

The Multitel group attracted investors by offering a whopping 4 percent guaranteed monthly interest for a minimum investment of P10,000 or a "double-your-money" rate in case the investor opts to avail himself of the 18-month lock-in investment scheme.

As of October last year, however, the Multitel group stopped paying investors, who have now been clamoring for a return of their money.

The SEC has been exerting effort to educate the public on the proliferation of investment scams specially in the provinces.

"We are looking at producing educational videos, and movies/TV-ready investor alert infomercials that will focus on the prevention of investment scams and fraud," SEC Chair Lilia Bautista said earlier.

Investments in Subic up 51%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SUBIC Bay Metropolitan Authority reported a 51 percent surge in registered investments last year mostly made by import and export traders keen on using the Subic Freeport zone as their base.

SBMA disclosed that a total of 180 new projects worth P2.5 billion were made last year from P1.6 billion in 2001.

Last year's investments were dominated by merchants such as Jet Eagle International Ltd., a trader of pharmaceutical and cosmetic goods, which invested P873 million; Anglo Asia Land Corp., a trader specializing in warehousing, transshipment, import and export of various materials, which pumped in P245 million; Autowide International (Subic) Corp., a general merchandise importer and exporter, which invested P159.25 million, and 2 World Traders Subic Inc., an import-export trader of pharmaceuticals and cosmetic goods (P100 million).

These firms were obviously keen on taking advantage of Subic's accessibility to international trade, duty-free perks as a freeport, and special economic zone incentives such as preferred taxes.

INVESTMENTS/ B3

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Pioneer Group buys out Allianz

Ayala to cut debts to $300M

AYALA Corp. is hoping to trim its debts—pegged currently at $640 million—to around $300 million in two to three years.

Ayala chief executive Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala said yesterday Ayala would take advantage of further opportunities to lighten its debt load.

"My aim is to bring it down to $300 million," Zobel said.

"We've done everything that we had to do last year," he said.

"Sometimes there are shifts and changes, but nothing is planned right now. There will be no extra financing, only some adjustments and some (debt) management activities," he added. *Doris C. Dumlao*

By Elena R. Torrijos

THE PIONEER Group has decided to buy German insurer Allianz's 50-percent stake in their Philippine joint venture, Pioneer Allianz Life Assurance Corp.

In a news statement, Pioneer head David Coyukiat said yesterday that with Allianz out of the driver's seat, Pioneer was now assuming the company's "future direction."

He said the company—to be known as "Pioneer Life Inc." starting Jan. 14—"will build on the knowledge, technological expertise and broad business perspective gained over the past five years."

"This decision follows Allianz's business review in line with current and expected market developments, as well as Pioneer's confidence to successfully take the company forward to its next phase," Coyukiat said.

Pioneer and Allianz have been together for five years.

Pioneer Allianz's business premiums grew from P8.3 million in 1998 to P174 million in 2002, making it one of the Philippines' 10 biggest life insurers.

Coyukiat said Pioneer would honor all policies held by Pioneer Allianz's customers.

"Policy conditions will not be affected by the alteration in ownership structure," he said.

Allianz is the fourth foreign life insurance company to quit on the Philippines since last year.

The German insurance giant follows on the footsteps of Aegon NV, CMG and MetLife, which have all shut down or sold their local operations because of a lackluster market.

"The Philippine market was not growing as fast as they wanted it to be," Pioneer communications manager Irene Quilino told the INQUIRER.

Quilino added that Allianz remained happy with the partnership with Pioneer.

The German insurer would continue to be the local group's reinsurer for both its non-life and life business, she said.

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Prof. Grace S. Ugut, PhD is the Assistant Dean of the Executive Education and Lifelong Learning (EXCELL) Center and concurrently the Program Director of the Executive MBA Program in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Her research focus is on her fields of expertise: capital market development and derivative instruments. She is engaged in banking and finance namely treasury, risk management, corporate finance, and fixed income securities.

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Debts up 17% in Oct.

THE COUNTRY'S public debt rose 17.5 percent in October to P2.765 trillion from the previous year on account of the government's massive borrowings aggravated by a weak local currency.

The government's debt stock was P412 billion more in October year-on-year and P49 billion more from P2.716 trillion in September.

These figures mean that every Filipino now owes the country's creditors about P35,000.

The Macapagal administration resorted to huge borrowings last year to finance a much higher budget deficit estimated to have reached P210 billion against a target of P130 billion.

The government borrowed a net amount of P190 billion last year against a target of P113 billion.

This level of borrowing in 2002 alone even excluded some P150 billion in interest payments.

Of the government debts as of October, P1.446 trillion were from the local market and P1.319 trillion or $24.818 billion were foreign borrowings.
Clarissa S. Batino

AIG clarifies AIF role

REGARDING the Jan. 8, 2003 article titled "AIG unit sues Benpres, Bayantel in New York," we would like to clarify that Asian Infrastructure Fund ("AIF"), a unit of AIG, is entirely different from The Asian Infrastructure Fund ("The AIF").

The former (AIF), in which AIG has investments, is the entity that holds convertible preferred shares in Bayantel and which is suing Benpres and Bayantel in New York.

The latter (The AIF), which holds approximately 7.87 percent of Bayantel "A" and "B" shares and has exercised its option to require Benpres to acquire its class "A" shares in Bayantel, is not affiliated in any way with AIG.

The AIF is a $780-million fund with lead investors, including Frank Russell Co., International Finance Corp. and Asian Development Bank.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, January 14, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.75	18	17.75	18	12,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	37	37	36	36.5	473,400
Citystate Savings Bank	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	27.5	27.5	27.5	27.5	77,400
First E-Bank Corp.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	10,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31	30.5	31	262,000
Philippine National Bank	25	25	25	25	100
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.25	17.25	17.25	17.25	700
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	320,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	90,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1210	1265	1210	1265	780
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1020	1040	1020	1035	9,680
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.75	33,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	780,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	475	477.5	472.5	475	2,680
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	2,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	3.55	3.55	3.55	3.55	9,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	300,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	315	320	315	320	46,350
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.01	0.011	15,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	9.5	9.5	9.3	9.4	153,000
Manila Electric Co. B	12.25	12.75	12.25	12.5	1,835,400
Petron Corp.	1.6	1.62	1.58	1.62	1,028,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	30,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.48	1.62	1.48	1.62	6,234,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.44	540,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.46	0.49	0.46	0.49	250,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	36,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	17	17.25	17	17.25	304,300
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	35.5	35.5	35.5	35.5	30,500
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	60,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58.5	58.5	58	58.5	283,100
San Miguel Corp. B	65	65.5	65	65.5	73,600
Universal Robina Corp.	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	1,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.45	4.55	4.45	4.45	4,411,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2.28	2.28	2.28	2.28	150,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	2.28	2.3	2.28	2.3	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	2,150,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.13	0.15	0.13	0.14	12,400,000
First Phil. Hldgs. Corp.	10	10	10	10	215,000
Ionics Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.8	0.8	310,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.38	1.38	1.32	1.34	623,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.6	0.61	0.58	0.61	3,370,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.165	0.175	0.165	0.175	850,000
Music Corp.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	60,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.035	0.035	0.035	0.035	200,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	12	12	12	12	5,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Bella Corp.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	1,090,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,240,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.29	370,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	13.25	13.75	13.25	13.75	248,700
Jollibee Warrants	16.5	16.75	16.5	16.75	26,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10	10	10	10	4,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.95	5	4.95	5	5,438,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	100,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.13	480,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.04	1.1	1.04	1.08	7,519,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	1.96	1.96	1.94	1.96	170,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	1,500,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	400,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.95	5.1	4.95	5.1	2,096,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.0032	0.003	0.0032	100,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	29,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	140,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	1,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	20,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	0.0014	2,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	0.0024	3,000,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.022	0.022	0.022	0.022	2,100,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	100,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	1,258,160	39,015,250.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	57,272,630	114,575,740.00
PRO	17,703,000	46,311,270.00
Mining	101,189,000	610,640.00
OIL	18,200,000	112,700.00
GRAND TOTALS :	195,622,790	200,625,600.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	384.42	DOWN 0.32
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,508.08	UP 6.94
PRO	458.00	UP 9.37
Mining	1,294.74	UP 5.56
OIL	1.07	DOWN 0.01
All Shares Index	657.25	UP 5.98
Composite	1,061.33	UP 6.28

NO. OF ADVANCES: 26; NO. OF DECLINES: 11; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 35; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 72; NO. OF TRADES: 1,543

DISCLOSURES

RFM Corp. has resolved a withholding tax issue in relation to the property dividends that **Cosmos Bottling Corp.** declared earlier but is now being undertaken by the former. The company shall also exert its best effort to secure the certificate authorizing registration from the Bureau of Internal Revenue within the next 60 days.

* * *

THE PHILIPPINE Stock Exchange has allowed **Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.** to again trade its shares after the Securities and Exchange Commission approved the company's extension of its corporate life by another 50 years.

* * *

ALLIED Banking Corp. has clarified that talks for it to buy a 5-percent stake in **New York Life Philippines Inc.** have yet to be finalized.

* * *

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank has said that after Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas approved its convertible loan, it expects to use the proceeds of the loan this month. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

Jan. 14, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	0.948767	1.000000	53.464000
Japan	Yen	0.007978	0.008409	0.449600
United Kingdom	Pound	1.518216	1.600200	85.553100
Hongkong	Dollar	0.121663	0.128233	6.855800
Switzerland	Franc	0.684684	0.721657	38.582700
Canada	Dollar	0.615483	0.648719	34.683100
Singapore	Dollar	0.546367	0.575871	30.788400
Australia	Dollar	0.553313	0.583192	31.179800
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.516756	2.652661	141.821900
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.253005	0.266667	14.257100
Brunei	Dollar	0.544799	0.574218	30.700000
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000107	0.000113	0.006000
Thailand	Baht	0.022198	0.023397	1.250900
UAE	Dirham	0.258329	0.272279	14.557100
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.054000	56.351100
ArgentinaPeso	0.284915	0.300300	16.055200	
Brazil	REAL	0.287941	0.303490	16.225800
Denmark	Kroner	0.134594	0.141862	7.584500
India	Rupee	0.019824	0.020894	1.117100
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.249709	0.263193	14.071400
Mexico	New Peso	0.090213	0.095084	5.083600
New Zealand	Dollar	0.510528	0.538097	28.768800
Norway	Kroner	0.136561	0.143935	7.695300
Pakistan	Rupee	0.016344	0.017227	0.921000
South Africa	Rand	0.109657	0.115578	6.179300
Korea	Won	0.000807	0.000851	0.045500
Sweden	Kroner	0.109204	0.115101	6.153800
Syria	Pound	0.018422	0.019417	1.038100
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.027572	0.029061	1.553700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000599	0.000631	0.033700

Roco's retreat

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

RAUL Roco's law firm has backtracked on the issue of Banco Filipino's P18-billion damage claim against the Bangko Sentral, Cocktales has confirmed.

Roco's initial position was that the thrift bank could make the Bangko Sentral, not the old Central Bank and its Board of Liquidators, liable for the "illegal" closure Banco Filipino suffered during the Marcos years.

But the advice, given by senior partner Jose "Jojo" Bunag to Banco Filipino, was later reversed after the Bangko Sentral got wind of the Roco position and after Roco and his other partners realized the political and financial implications of the Bunag advice.

(Bunag has since left the firm, and has just been appointed deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue in charge of legal and inspection.)

After all, the Bangko Sentral was the leading and most prestigious client of the Roco law firm, and Roco has prided himself as the author/sponsor of the act rehabilitating the central bank.

More than the 180-degree turn, the flip-flopping episode gives a rare glimpse of Roco's private business practice going against his carefully polished Mr. Corporate Clean image.

One, it confirmed that Roco, while chair of the Senate banking committee and while pushing for the passage of the New Bangko Sentral Act and related banking legislation, was receiving substantial monthly retainer from the Bangko Sentral.

Second, after having had the Bangko Sentral as client, Roco's law firm takes on Banco Filipino as client and, worse, gives advice on the thrift bank on how to decapitate the bank of banks.

Third, after realizing the folly of the advice, Roco's law firm drops Banco Filipino as client but shifts retainership to Banco Filipino's sister company, BF Homes. Same dog, different collar.

Another Arroyo

GLORIA Macapagal-Arroyo may have renounced her 2004 presidential ambition for the sake of national unity, but another Arroyo kin, it appears, is determined to capture the chairmanship of another fractious institution.

We are referring to Alicia Arroyo, a sister-in-law of First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, whom present Philippine Stock Exchange chair, Vivian Yuchengco, is pushing to succeed her.

It helps that Ms. Arroyo, in addition to her political provenance, is also the nominee of RCBC Securities, a Yuchengco company.

Yuchengco denied a heard-through-the-grapevine item here on Monday that Ms. Arroyo, the stockbroker, was part of the Malacañang-Speaker Jose de Venecia-brokered no-election deal between Yuchengco and her arch rival, ex-PSE chair Robert Coyiuto Jr.

"That is just a figment of Robert's imagination," the ever-colorful Yuchengco said of the alleged inclusion of the RCBC/Yuchengco nominee in the no-election deal.

In that deal, Yuchengco and Coyiuto and their known allies have agreed not to run in the next elections in an attempt to remove the political gridlock in PSE affairs caused by a running feud between the Yuchengco and Coyiuto factions.

In return, Coyiuto, who topped last year's vote but failed to win the PSE chairmanship anew after the Malacañang appointees in the PSE board voted for Yuchengco, will be pacified with a presidential appointment as capital markets adviser title, an honorific similar to what the late PSE chair Eduardo Lim received.

Mike-Korina meeting

A GROUP of female newspaper editors espied ABS-CBN's Korina Sanchez in a hush-hush huddle with GMA's Mike Enriquez Monday noon at the Chateau 1771 restaurant in Ortigas Center.

Sanchez apparently invited the rival broadcaster for lunch, the reservation being made under the Channel 2 newscaster's name.

The spies immediately speculated that a switch in network alliances was in the offing, with Sanchez as the usual suspect.

A check by Cocktales with a pro-Sanchez grapevine revealed, however, that the Channel 2 broadcaster was simply trying to recruit her colleague in her lobby to push the controversial medical malpractice bill.

Sanchez has become the very vocal proponent of the medical malpractice lobby to the annoyance of the medical community. Imagine if she could bring the firepower of Enriquez to her cause.

Hmmm, the two leading broadcasters reading news and producing shows with a medical malpractice slant in the country's largest radio-TV networks.

Good for victims, bad for doctors, question mark for objec-

COCKTALES/ B5

Investments . . .

From page B1

Another key investor last year was Ecofriendly Equipment Corp., which invested P162 million to put up a facility that would rehabilitate used commercial and industrial machinery and heavy equipment.

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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	-	1,500,000
Baguio Country Club	600,000	680,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	80,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	80,000
Camp John Hay	-	240,000
Canlubang	-	500,000
Canyonwoods	-	180,000
Capitol Hills	-	110,000
Celebrity Sports Club	165,000	210,000
Club Filipino	-	150,000
Eastridge "A"	-	130,000
Evercrest "A"	-	80,000
Forest Hills "A"	175,000	200,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	250,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	250,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	220,000	275,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	10,500,000	Please Call
Manila Golf (Individual)	10,200,000	Please Call
Manila Polo	Please Call	2,600,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	500,000	600,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	650,000	Please Call
Manila Yacht Club	-	630,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	-	130,000
Metropolitan Club "B"	-	130,000
Mimosa (Individual)	-	140,000
Montemar (Individual)	-	35,000
Mt. Malarayat (Individual)	Please Call	300,000
Mt. Malarayat (Corporate)	-	450,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Puerto Azul	-	100,000
Punta Fuego	-	Please Call
Quezon City Sports Club	180,000	230,000
Rockwell	*320,000	400,000
Royale Tagaytay "A"	-	60,000
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	90,000
Sherwood Hills "B"	-	170,000
Sherwood Hills "C"	-	180,000
Sta. Elena "A"	Please Call	1,550,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	-	280,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	-	170,000
Tagaytay Country Club	340,000	400,000
Tagaytay Highlands	800,000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	-	750,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	150,000	170,000
Valley Golf	260,000	330,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	Please Call	-

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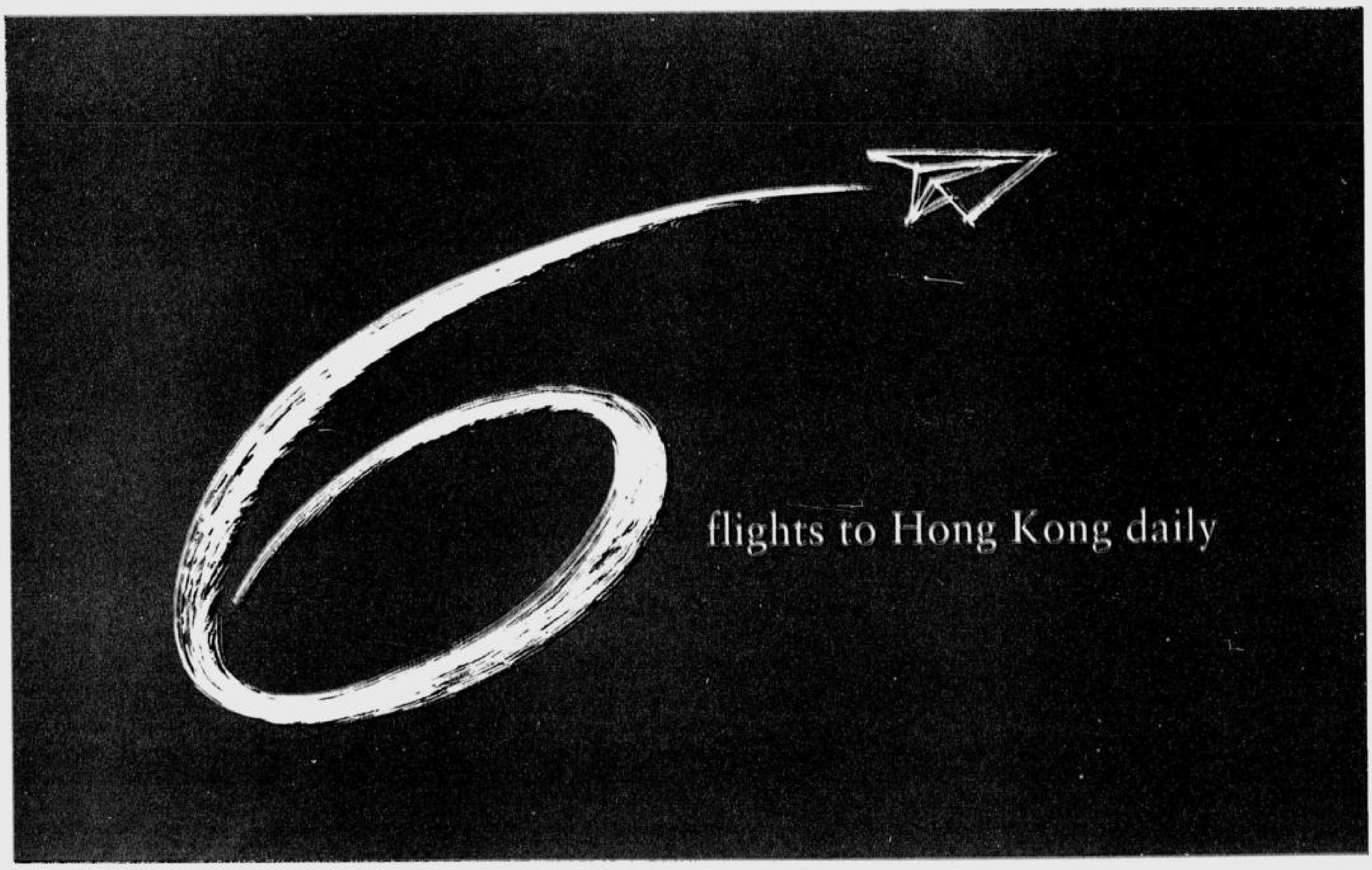

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CX912	*0900*	*1100*	CX901	0910	1105
CX906	1115	1315	CX919	1435	1635
CX900	1300	1505	CX903	1635	1835
CX918	1745	1945	*CX913*	*1940*	*2135*
CX902	2030	2225	CX905	2155	2350

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Iraq war shouldn't destabilize world economy

OTTAWA—A war in Iraq should not destabilize the international financial system, which has already taken major steps to manage risks and deal with external shocks, the incoming head of the Bank for International Settlements said on Monday.

Speaking to Reuters in a telephone interview from London, Bank of Canada Senior Deputy Governor Malcolm Knight said there was no evidence of "severe weaknesses" in the world financial system. But he admitted Japan would need further restructuring to reform its fragile banking sector.

"To my mind, an event like Iraq is not one that should destabilize the international financial system," Knight said, noting that the financial system was well able to cope with "many types of risk."

He added: "The events of the last two years—the decline in stock markets, the governance and information provision scandals that have taken place and so on—have put stresses on these institutions. But there's really no evidence that the system as a whole has severe weaknesses."

He said he saw little risk of Japan's deflation spreading to other countries, but made clear that more work was needed in Japan to strengthen its banks.

"I think the indications I've seen suggest there's still significant(ly) more work to be done in the restructuring of the financial system in Japan and that will be important to strengthening Japan's macro-economic performance," he said. *Reuters*

World economy will grow in 2003, slowly

BASEL, Switzerland—The world economy is expected to recover—slowly—in 2003, albeit at a very subdued pace, the head of the Bank of England said Monday after a meeting with other top central bankers.

Eddie George said the United States economy could grow by some 3 percent this year, while the European Union's 12-nation euro zone could reach 2.5 percent. The two are the world's largest economies.

"We are seeing relatively slow, but relatively steady growth in the world economy" through this year, George told reporters following a meeting of the Group of 10 central bankers. The bankers noted, however, that growth could be hurt by the economic fallout from a war in Iraq.

The G-10, which has 11 members, consists of the Group of Seven industrialized nations—the United States, Britain, Germany, Japan, France, Canada and Italy—plus Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands and Belgium.

The central bankers' predictions are in line with earlier growth forecasts by the United Nations and the International Monetary Fund.

The group welcomed the decision by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries to increase output quotas by 1.5 million barrels a day to counter rising oil prices.

The decision to raise the total output quota to 24.5 million barrels a day "was seen as going in the right direction," George said.

With the US economy continuing to struggle and the threat of war in Iraq hanging over the global outlook, George acknowledged that "everybody, of course, was extremely conscious of the (downside) risks."

He said, however, that the risks should not be exaggerated and that the central banks are prepared to act as needed, noting that G-10 banks, with the exception of Japan, still have room to maneuver on interest rates. In Japan, interest rates are effectively zero.

The Japanese economy is likely to continue limping along in 2003, George said. *AP*

CEOs confident about US economy

NEW YORK—Business leaders were more confident about the state of the economy in the closing months of 2002, although they didn't expect a notable pickup in growth in the new year, a report released Monday said.

The Conference Board said its business confidence index for the fourth quarter rose to 58 from 54 in the third quarter. That was below the 61 mark seen in the second quarter and the 66 reported for the first.

Any number above 50 indicates more positive than negative responses to survey questions, the Conference Board said.

"Chief executives are more optimistic now than they were in the third quarter," Conference Board economist Lynn Franco said. "But the level of optimism does not suggest a dramatic acceleration in economic growth during the first half of 2003."

Even as their estimates of growth remained tame, the business leaders nevertheless grew more optimistic for activity during the next half year. The fourth-quarter expectations index was 63, up from 60 in the third quarter.

As that confidence grew slightly, the majority of business leaders said they planned price increases this year. Some 6 percent of respondents planned price increases of 10 percent or more. *AP*

DISNEY Chair and CEO Michael Eisner (right), Disney president and Chief Operating Officer Robert Iger (center) and Hong Kong's Chief Executive Tung Chee Hwa pose with Mickey and Minnie Mouse during the groundbreaking ceremony for the first-ever Disney theme park and resort in China, Hong Kong Disneyland at Penny's Bay on Lantau Island. Hong Kong's Disneyland theme park will open in early 2006 in an attempt to inject some life into its sagging economy and lure more tourists. REUTERS

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EX-TREASURY CHIEF'S VIEW

Bush's plan to do little for economy

PITTSBURGH—Former Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill said the president's plan to eliminate taxes on corporate dividends will do little or nothing to improve the nation's economy.

"I would not have done it," he said.

Speaking out for the first time since being forced from his post, O'Neill said some of the money from the president's $674 billion tax-cut plan would be better spent to shore up Social Security, the US public pension system.

But O'Neill credited President George W. Bush for fighting terrorism effectively and said the president hasn't gotten enough credit for highlighting education issues.

Bush has defended the tax-cut plan against Democratic charges that it favors the rich. Besides eliminating taxes on stock dividends, the 10-year plan would speed up tax rate reductions, increase the child tax credit and accelerate deductions planned for business equipment.

O'Neill made his remarks during and after Friday's taping of a public affairs program co-produced by the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and KDKA-TV in Pittsburgh. The paper reported on O'Neill's remarks in Sunday's edition.

O'Neill was ousted last month after angering Bush with public remarks that reflected his lukewarm views toward White House tax-cut policies.

Both he and White House economic adviser Larry Lindsey, who also was ousted, were accused by the president's political advisers of failing to communicate the administration's economic policies. The firings were seen as part of a shake-up designed to control political damage from the ailing economy.

When asked about his departure Friday, O'Neill said, "I was never angry with the president. I was happy to leave."

O'Neill criticized the political and media environment in Washington, which he felt stifled honest discussions about the nation's problems.

"It's all about sound bites, deluding the people, pandering to the lowest common denominator," he said. "I didn't adjust (in Washington) and I'm not going to start now." *AP*

AOL merger a 'disappointment'—Case

NEW YORK —Outgoing AOL Time Warner chair Steve Case acknowledged Monday that the 2001 merger he helped orchestrate has not lived up to expectations, but he remains confident that the marriage of Time Warner and America Online will prove sound over the long run.

"There's no question that this merger so far has been a disappointment," he said in an appearance on CNBC. But "if you look out 10 to 15 years, I think people will look back and have a different view on this merger."

Case announced Sunday that he would resign his post at the media conglomerate in May, saying he had become a distraction and had concluded AOL Time Warner was better off without him as chair.

"Some shareholders continue to focus their disappointment with the company's post-merger performance on me personally," said Case, who will remain on the board of directors.

The decision was greeted with some relief on Wall Street, where many investors, furious over the more than 60-percent plunge in the company's stock price and an accounting scandal, had been demanding his departure.

When he departs, the company will be without any of the key architects responsible for the deal. In morning trading on the New York Stock Exchange, shares of AOL Time Warner rose 33 cents, or 2 percent, to $15.21.

Case's departure may have been hastened by recent reports of more financial problems at the company.

AOL Time Warner, which took a $54 billion charge last year to account for a decline in America Online's value, is expected to report another multibillion write-down later this month for the same reason—possibly in excess of $10 billion, according to some analysts.

The announcement came almost exactly two years after the company's big merger was finalized.

AOL Time Warner spokesperson Tricia Primrose said Case made his decision Friday after months of consideration, and notified executives and the board over the weekend. *AP*

Pressure rises on Japan bank to put economy back on track

TOKYO—Pressure on the Bank of Japan to adopt a radical new approach to help cure the country's economic ills intensified on Tuesday as data showed slowing money growth and a major ratings agency urged the central bank to take action.

Moody's Investors Service, weighing into the debate over whether Japan should introduce inflation targeting, said that reinflation could have a positive impact on Japan's ratings.

"The Japanese Ministry of Finance's proposal to foster inflation is a more vigorous approach to solving the country's economic and financial problems than earlier policies," said Moody's, which cited ineffective policies as a reason for its downgrading of Japan's long-term local currency debt last May.

The comments come as Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi prepares to select a new head of the central bank to replace incumbent Masaru Hayami, who retires in March.

Despite an unprecedented monetary easing policy that has pushed down Japanese interest rates to next to zero, Hayami has drawn criticism from the government for not doing enough to break Japan's out of its economic stagnation.

Data released by the BOJ earlier on Tuesday showed that Japan's money supply growth slowed in December to its most anemic pace in nearly two years. Economics and Financial Services Minister Heizo Takenaka, speaking shortly after the figures were announced, repeated his call for a more expansionary monetary policy.

"...We recognize the need for more expansionary monetary policy. Of course we understand this monetary policy should be decided independently by the central bank," Takenaka said during a lecture at the Australian National University in Canberra.

The data showed that Japan's most widely watched measure of money supply, M2 plus certificates of deposit, rose 2.2 percent in December from a year earlier—a sharp slowdown from rises of more than 3 percent in recent months and the lowest rate since January 2001. *Reuters*

PLDT land in Makati up for redevelopment

By Abigail L. Ho

PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has signed a joint venture agreement with Burgundy Asset Development Corp. for the redevelopment of PLDT's idle assets in Makati.

Under the agreement, Burgundy will develop PLDT's 8,056-square-meter land along Malugay Street into a mixed-use, commercial/high-rise residential development.

Previously used as a warehouse and parking lot by PLDT subsidiary Smart Communications Inc., the property is expected to become more useful to PLDT as Burgundy will give it prime units in the developed property.

"We are committed to generating more value out of our existing assets and resources. We are carefully studying current use of our properties and facilities nationwide with the end in view of optimizing their potential," PLDT asset protection and management head Mar Paguio said in a statement.

Based on initial discussions between the two parties, the developers will put up three residential towers on top of a podium deck, which will house retail and commercial spaces and first-class amenities for residents. The units, according to PLDT officials, will be priced reasonably.

Development work will start this year and will be completed in three years.

PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan said in an earlier interview that the company would be focusing on streamlining its operations by getting something out of its idle assets through sale or joint venture agreements.

Gov't pursues farm modernization

AGRICULTURE Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. said the government program to modernize the agricultural sector was aimed at cutting down import dependence, achieve food sufficiency and generate expanded job opportunities in the regions.

A modern agriculture sector and job-creation are intertwined, Lorenzo said. This is because productive farms create demand for manpower and fuel downstream economic activities that require laborers.

He pointed out that farmers "have to be encouraged to sustain agricultural activity by helping them see that this will bring them significant economic benefits."

Lorenzo said the government was in the process of identifying other constraints to farm productivity and to the improvement of farmers' income. These are critical, he said, to the government's ability to sustain its assistance to the agricultural sector's bid to catch up with the rest of the country's Asian neighbors.

He said the government would continue to pursue three important programs in the effort to energize the agricultural sector. These are the enhancement of markets, the promotion of new technologies and the adoption of structural reforms.

Lorenzo said the promotion of new technologies, such as agricultural biotechnology, is also crucial to the modernization effort. He cited the recent approval by the government of the domestic propagation of the popular high-yielding Bt corn variety is an important step in this direction.

The pressure to produce more food with less land to till calls for scientific techniques that bring about higher yield per hectare. Agricultural biotechnology enabled the development of Bt corn which is highly resistant to the deadly Asiatic corn borer.

The use of this corn variety also results into less application of toxic chemical insecticides. Research and actual farm trials showed that corn farmers will make an additional P5,595 per hectare using Bt corn seeds.

Cocktales

From page B3

tive reporting.

Lilia's lawyer

THE BASIS for our sniping at SEC Chair Lilia Bautista in Monday's column has been overtaken by events, long before we wrote the column.

We reported that the new general counsel of the Securities and Exchange Commission, Vernette Umali-Paco, had a string of cases before the Ombudsman, in addition to a dismissal recommendation from the Office of the Government Corporate Counsel when she was still with the Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority.

It turns out that all the Ombudsman cases have been dismissed, as well as the OGCC recommendation overturned, before Umali-Paco was appointed to the SEC.

The Ombudsman cases, 14 not 17 as had earlier been reported, were all filed by disgruntled PLRA personnel, where Umali-Paco was a long-time general manager-chief executive officer.

In short, Umali-Paco had a clean slate when Bautista finally took her in as SEC general counsel in October 2002, contrary to what was suggested in this column on Monday.

Our apologies to both Umali-Paco and Bautista for this fact-checking lapse.

Heard through the grapevine

THE GOVERNMENT and ex-Ambassador Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. have agreed on a formula to remove the overhang of sequestration on United Coconut Planters Bank.

The formula calls for the simultaneous transfer of the coco levy shares and investments to a dormant UCPB Bank (whose final ownership will be determined later by the Supreme Court), segregating the non-performing assets of the present bank to a holding company, and bidding the remaining bank assets to any interested financial institution.

The government is now trying to get all the farmer group-claimants to agree on the formula as well. *(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or at cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)*

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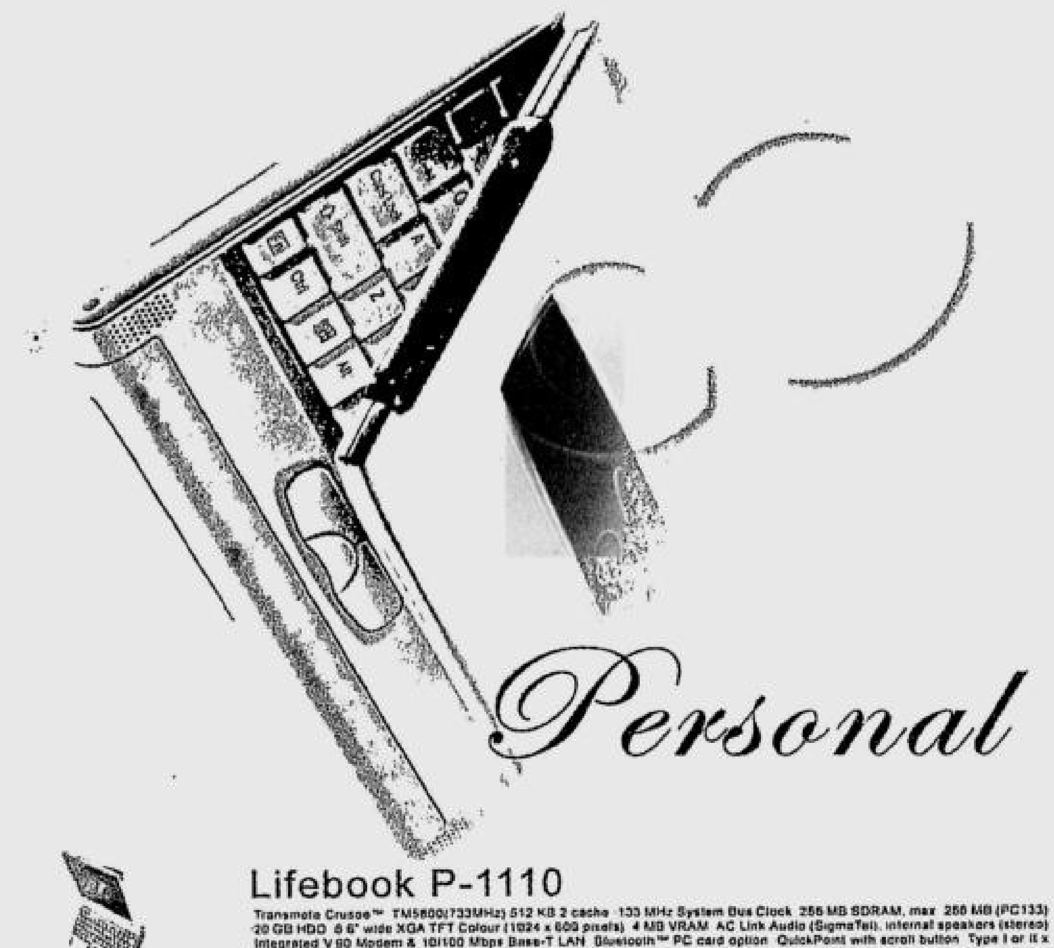

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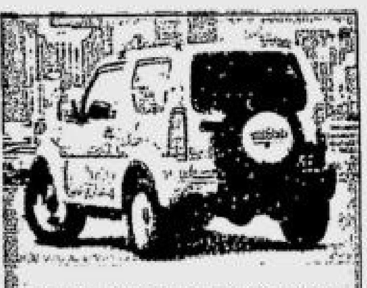

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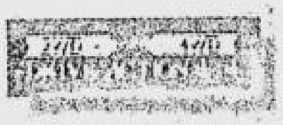

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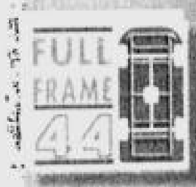

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAREGIVER TRNG 5276418

THE WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD (Remnant)
is inviting all members & x-members of the Worldwide Church of God to attend Sabbath Services starting January 25, 2003 from 1:00-5:00pm at Asian Social Inst Rm 301 between Pedro Gil & Escoda cor Leon Guinto Malate Manila. For more info call Alice at #4229603 or 0920-4184327 or write to WCG-Remnant #8 Batino St. Proj 3 QC

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is given that the estate of the late DANTE STA. ANA w/ waiver of rights was extrajudicially settled by his heirs as per Doc#63 Page#13 Bk#XXXVII series of 2003 before notary public Atty. El Cid C Fajardo Pasig City PDI 1/15,22,29,2003

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late BASILIO CABRERA has been settled by his heirs per Doc. No. 300; Page No. 40; Book No. XXVII; Series of 2002 before Notary Public Atty. ANGEL R. GONZALES PTR No. 9968971 Pasay City
(PDI- January 15, 22 & 29 2003)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late IRENEO V. GUERRERO, who died on January 9, 2001, the object of settlement is executed by his heirs before Notary Public Expedito Mapa of Naga City as per Doc.#570, Page#57, Book#19, Series of 2002 (PDI-Jan. 8,15 & 22, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that Official Receipt No. 5301 to 5350 under RFM Corp. was lost last Dec. 28, 2002. All transaction made after will not be honored

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CONRADO BASACA LAUREL

of Cabuyao, Laguna

Died in the Grace of our Lord on January 13, 2003
at the age of 57.

Beloved son to **Herminio** (†) and **Consuelo** (†);
Kuya Dado to **Ningle, Ostic** and **Nanette, Engging** and **Junior, Wendell** and **Owen**;
Papa Dado to **Kaye, Vanny** and **Enzo; Toktok** and **Rommel, Francis, Ernest, Chico** and **Nikki; Charizze, Madel** and **Eric**; and **JayJay**;
Teacher, "father" and friend to many;
He will be deeply missed.

His remains lie in state at the family residence on J.P. Rizal, Cabuyao, Laguna.

Interment will be on Thursday, January 16, 2003 at the Cabuyao Municipal Cemetery after the 1:30 p.m. Mass at the St. Polycarp Church.

Message of Thanks

ROBERTO GOPUANSUY, SR.

Joined his Creator on December 14, 2002.

We, his loving wife **Aurelia**; children **Boy** and **Nancy Ching, Baby** and **Hali Co, Olivia** and **Roger Begre, Tony** and **Cielo Caballero,** and **Beth Sferrino** together with his grandchildren, great grandchild and relatives wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all those who paid their last respects and grieved with us, offered and celebrated Masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, kept vigil, were present at the necrological services, Novena Masses, funeral rites and who in various ways gave us comfort at the time of our great loss and sorrow.

Message of Thanks

For visiting us and being with us in our time of sorrows...
For praying with us and for us...
For the Mass cards and messages of sympathy and condolence...
For the beautiful flowers to express compassion...
For joining us in our nightly vigils...
For attending the Masses and funeral rites...
For thinking of us in our hour of grief...
For all that you have done to console our hearts...

Our sincerest gratitude.
From the family of the late

Francisco C. Viray

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

TERESITA SANTIAGO CONTI

Born on December 26, 1927
Died on January 13, 2003 at the age of 75.

Her husband, **Claro** and children, **Corazon, Cesar (†), Carmelita** and **Cecilia** together with their respective families request for your prayers for the repose of her soul.

She now lies in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City. Mass will be held on January 17, 2003, 1:00 p.m.

Interment will follow on January 17, 2003, 3:00 p.m. Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

RUFINO RICAFRENTE REYES

of
Van Nuys, California & Gen. Trias, Cavite
Peacefully joined his Creator on Januayr 13, 2003.

His loving wife **Odeng**; children **Ronald & Josephine Reyes, Dr. Jose & Bel Isidro, Eileen & Zeev, Manny & Mirela Chavez, Arnel & Jo Reyes, Jeric & Cherry Reyes**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, & sisters request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body will arrive Wednesday and will lie in state at their family residence in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Interment will be on Sunday, January 13, 2003 at 3:00 p.m.

"Let the words of my mouth meet your Favor, keep the thoughts of my heart before you, Lord, my rock, my redeemer..." Psalm 21:15

CLASSIFIEDS

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION AND TO BID

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- Computer Server (1)
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1. **FOR METHODS ENGINEERING LABORATORY**
- Digital Stop watch (12)
- Radiometer/Photometer (4)
- Digital Barometer (4)
- Sound Level Meter (2)
- Sensor Selector (4)
- Scanner (max. document size 8½ x 14) (1)
- Printer (1)
- Lapel Microphone (1)
- Multi-media Projector 3M (1)
- Bicycle exerciser with heart rate gauge & blood pressure gauge

2. **FOR PRODUCTION PLANNING AND CONTROL AND FACILITIES PLANNING AND DESIGN SUBJECTS**
- Production Management Simulation Software

For Inquiries: Please visit Central Purchasing Office.

(PDI – Jan. 15, 18 & 19, 2003)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE POSTAL CORPORATION
PHILPOST

PREQUALIFICATION BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR PHILPOST BOND FLOTATION

INVITATION TO BID

The Philippine Postal Corporation invites interested and qualified Financial Advisor/Issue Manager and Lead Underwriter for the proposed contracting of services for its Bond Offering for improvement of its operational capability and financial viability.

The pertinent Terms of Reference (TOR) which forms part of this notice can be secured from the Secretariat, Legal Service Office, PPC Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila from **January 14** up to **February 3, 2003.**

Pre-Bid Conference will be on February 4, 2003 at 2:00 p.m. at the Business Operations Center, 3F Central Office Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

Submission of bid proposals will be until the close of office hours on **February 10, 2003.**

Opening of Bids will be on **February 11, 2003** at 2:00 p.m. at the Business Operations Center, 3F Central Office Building, Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

Philpost reserves the right to re-bid or reject any or all bids, waive any formalities or infirmities and accept the bid considered most advantageous to the corporation.

Participation in the bidding is not a guaranty for an award of the contract.

(Sgd.) ASUNCION P. LORETO
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Jan. 15, 20 & 27, 2003)

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ADVISORY

Notice is hereby given that the following insurance companies have been prohibited from issuing insurance policies and bonds of any nature or kind in view of the "cease and desist" orders issued to them on 30 September 2002 for failure to comply with the minimum paid-up capital required under Department Order No. 10-2002 dated 31 July 2002.

1. South Sea Surety & Insurance Company, Inc.
2. Luzon Insurance & Surety Company, Inc.
3. Investors Assurance Corporation
4. First Quezon City Insurance Company, Inc.
5. Far Eastern Surety & Insurance Company, Inc.
6. Times Surety & Insurance Company, Inc.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO T. MALINIS
Insurance Commissioner

(PDI – January 15, 2003)

LOCAL WATER UTILITIES ADMINISTRATION
P.O. Box 034 U.P. Post Office, Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Tel. No. 920-55-81 to 99, 921-56-01 Fax No.: (632) 922-34-84
Administration's Direct Line (02) 929-61-07
Administration's E-mail Address lnjamora@mozcom.com
LWUA E-Mail Address lwua@mozcom.com

December 17, 2002

MEMORANDUM CIRCULAR NO. 008-02

TO : ALL WATER DISTRICTS
SUBJECT : REVIEW OF WATER TARIFF ADJUSTMENTS OF WATER DISTRICTS

The Local Water Utilities Administration (LWUA) made known its stand on Executive Order (EO) No. 123, entitled: "Reconstituting the National Water Resources Board", particularly Sec. 6, thereof.

In its letter dated 04 December 2002 addressed to Hon. Avelino Cruz, Jr., Chief Presidential Legal Counsel, Office of the President, copy of which attached as Annex "A", LWUA stated thus:

> "In view of the foregoing, while we adhere to the legal principle that an Executive Order cannot effectively amend a Presidential Decree, we take the stand that LWUA will continue reviewing the water tariff adjustments of water districts which it has financial exposure and upon the satisfactory completion thereof the approved rates shall then be implemented in accordance with Section 63 of PD 198, as amended. To promote the financial viability of these water districts, we shall accordingly inform the water districts in a circular the soonest."

For your information and guidance.

(Sgd.) LORENZO H. JAMORA
Administrator

(PDI – Jan. 13, 15 & 17, 2003)

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Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

For the SALE of UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS

"as is, where is"

Date of Bid Opening: JANUARY 27, 2003

ITEM DESCRIPTION/ LOCATION	MINIMUM BID PRICE
TANK, Waste Oil Storage Tank No. 4, 90 cu.m. capacity	P 150,400.00
TANK, Waste Oil Storage Tank No. 5, 90 cu.m. capacity	P 84,600.00
Location: NPC-SPUG Naga Mooring Site, Naga, Cebu	

Sealed bids in the prescribed form shall be received until 10:00 AM on **January 27, 2003** at the NPC-SPUG Office, 2/F Training Center Bldg., NPC-OBC, Quezon Ave. cor. Agham Rd., Diliman, Q.C. and shall then and there be opened and publicly read:

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:
1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL BID PRICE; and
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN OF THE BIDDER (2001) OR FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY (ORIGINAL OR BIR CERTIFIED TRUE COPY)
3. CERTIFICATE OF SITE INSPECTION ISSUED BY THE MANAGER, SPUG-VISAYAS

Additional information, request for inspection and bid forms at P50.00 per set may be secured from Ms. P. F. Victoria at the above address or call Tel. No. 9213190/9213541 Local 5583. **Deadline for the issuance of bid forms is 3:00 PM on January 24, 2003.**

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality found therein and to accept/reject such proposals as may be advantageous to its interest.

SPUG ASSET MANAGEMENT SUB-COMMITTEE

(Sgd.) R.C. CASTILLO
Chairman

(PDI - Jan. 13, 14 & 15, 2003)

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SPEAKER JOSE DE VENECIA, JR.

and the

MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

deeply mourn the demise of a
distinguished colleague

HONORABLE REYNALDO A. CALALAY

Congressman, 1st District, Quezon City
10th, 11th, 12th Congress (1995-2003)

who joined his Creator last Saturday, January 11, 2003 at the age of 63.

His body will be brought to the House of Representatives today, January 15, 2003 at 8:00 o'clock in the morning from Quezon City Hall. Requiem Mass will be held at the Plenary Hall at 10:00 a.m., followed by a Necrological Service at 11:00 a.m. Afterwhich, his remains will be brought to San Pedro Bautista Church Sanctuario, San Francisco del Monte, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

We request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Arch. CESAR SAUVA VERGEL DE DIOS, Fuap

Peacefully joined his beloved wife, AURORA MILAN, to be with the LORD, on 13 January, 2003 at the age of 85.

His children, **ANNA & NING LAGMAN, CESAR JR. & MARILU, ARIEL & NANNETTE, PEACHY & DODONG CACANANDO** and grandchildren **CARLO, ALEX, BERN, ROB, MIKIE, DULCE, MON, RC, DENISE, & DANIEL**; brothers, sisters & in-laws request your prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

The remains lie in state at **CHRIST THE KING MORTUARY CHAPEL**, Green Meadows Ave., Quezon City.

Cremation will be on 17 January, 2003. Ashes will be interred at the **CHRIST THE KING** Crypt after the 3 p.m. Mass on the same day.

Maria "Inang Litang" Limcaoco Alipit

Former Vice Mayor of Cabuyao, Laguna

Peacefully left us to rest in the loving embrace of the Lord on Jan. 13, 2003, at the age of 96.

Her loving sister-in-law and brother Milang & Menteng† , daughters and sons-in-law; Bobot & Dodong Teves, Tina & Leslie Reyes; nephews and nieces-in-law Lito & Lolita, Floralinda, Charito & Jack †, Manolo & Norie, Dely & Naning †, Jun & Tess Alipit, Lee & Jun Sanchez, Mila & Lito de Guzman, Frankie & Joselyn Alipit, Rene †, grandchildren & great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

Vigil is at her residence at No. 60 Barangay Bigaa, Cabuyao, Laguna.

Interment will be announced later.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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LEONARD R. CASACOP

August 23, 1963 – January 13, 2003

His wife Luningning L. Casacop; child Ma. Bernadette; father Reynaldo Casacop and mother Pacita; brothers Reynaldo, Jr. & Eves, Loreycitonards; sisters Lalaine and John, Lisa and Yoko, Lilian and Dindo request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Dr. A. Santos Ave., Parañaque City.

Cremation will be at Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City on January 18, 2003. (Time will be announced later).

For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16

email: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph

PEOPLE at WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

How much should you trust the company doctor?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: My company has an on-site health clinic for employees. I really like the doctor, but a friend told me I'm better off seeing an outside doctor (even though it means making a copayment) than giving my health information to my company.

Should I Take My Pants Off At Work?

From Marcus Welby to ER, we have a long tradition of physicians who cure whatever ails you (usually within the hour), who never send a bill, and who always put you at the center of the drama. Unfortunately, corporate life isn't always like the little screen. If you work for a company that has an in-house medical clinic, the staff there may have a severe case of divided loyalties as they try to treat both you and the company's bottom line. Even routine checkups can reveal information about you that you'd rather the company not know.

In "Can a Visit to the Company Doc Help a Cold but Hurt a Career?" (New York Times), a spokesman for Ford recommended that employees see a company doctor only for job related injuries. All other conditions should be reserved for your personal physician. (Your personal doc may be paid by the company's health plan, but it's unlikely that she would release your health records to your employer.) Privacy experts quoted in the article offered the following guidelines for deciding when to see the company doc and when to steer clear:

Procedures that can be "safely" performed by the company physician: These include job related injuries, flu shots, and most hearing tests. Little can come of these procedures that might cause your employer to consider you a liability.

Procedures that could jeopardize your job: These include blood pressure and cholesterol tests (unusually high scores could encourage your employer to dismiss you for fear of large medical bills down the road); cancer screenings (again, a positive response could generate concern about your long-term health care costs); and, amazingly enough, allergy shots (your employer could overreact to your allergy and restrict the type of work you do).

Procedures that should never be done by a company physician: These include genetic screening and H.I.V. tests (no surprise here), but also urinalysis. According to the privacy pro's, sharing urinalysis results with your boss is like "throwing your medical chart on someone's desk."

And what's so bad about that? It's generally illegal for employers to discriminate against employees based on information from their medical records-but (gasp!) it happens: employees have been fired for having expensive diseases (they've just been told they were sacked for something else). And while, sure, you could sue if you were fired (just when you really needed the paycheck and the insurance), the chance that you'd want to (or could afford to) is pretty slim.

So what it all boils down to is this: don't risk big-time trouble to avoid a small co-payment. Go to the doc when you need to-just not one who's a fellow employee. Now that CFO's' knives are as sharp as surgeons', an ounce of privacy may be worth a pound of continued employment.

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

(Mr. Rosner is the author of "The Boss's Survival Guide," McGraw Hill 2001, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning Working Wounded.com and RetentionEvangelist.com. He is based in Seattle, Washington, USA. E-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.*)*

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ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

By Tita Datu Puangco

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

I am 18 years old, a second year student taking up BS Physical Therapy at a university in Manila. From the time I was filled up the application form for the entrance exam until this very moment, I do not know what course I should take. Somehow, I can't foresee myself as being someone someday.

I am planning to shift my course, but the problem is, what course? My aunt recommended that I shift to Nursing because it's now "in demand" but I told her that I would still be in the same predicament. What I mean is, PT and Nursing are both paramedical courses, they are both in the field of science and I am weak in science courses. I can hardly understand what I am studying. My brain capacity is not enough to study voluminous books. Every time I fail in our major subjects, I tell myself, "*Sinasabi ko na nga ba eh, mahirap mag-aral ng* PT!" I condemn myself for taking up this course. I don't like it. I don't want to disappoint my mother if I shift my course. She's the one who chose this course for me. But I think, it is time for me to decide on my own. What should I do?

Mixed-Up Student

I empathize with you. You feel like a square peg in a round hole. What I suggest is for you to have a conversation as soon as you can with your mother. Tell her how unhappy you are studying your current course when you are not inclined to the sciences. I am sure no mother would want her child to be unhappy.

We had this experience with one of our children, who took a double degree course in international studies and accounting. She would come home unhappy because she was excelling in one and not doing so well in the other course. As a mother I realized that she might be trying to fulfill our expectations instead of following her own inclinations. So, one evening, I went to her room, asking her what was wrong. At that point, she burst into tears and told me how frustrated she was with her other course. So I told her, "Sometimes the best thing to do is to call it quits." We agreed for her to reconfigure her other course to lead to something more dynamic, without losing much of the educational credits she had already earned. Now, she is a graduate of International Studies and Applied Corporate Management and we are very pleased with her career growth and development.

But the most important thing is to know your self. What are your talents? What are your interests? What is your personality? What kind of work appeals to you? The beauty of this era is the fact that you have many options in terms of work. Work need not be an eight to five job. Your hobby can be your work. For example, the son of a friend loves to cook. He studied in a culinary school to become a chef and now has a very good offer to work in a hotel abroad.

I agree that you have reached the age when you can decide for yourself. Think through your options carefully. Be candid with your parents. May you have the courage to pursue a course that will make you happy and fulfilled not just today but in the future.

(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph *or fax to 892-2902.)*

BREAKFAST CHAT

How to find purpose in work, life

By Ricky B. Garcia

PEOPLE are frequently overwhelmed by the many choices today at work and in life. We need to make many decisions-about our jobs, families, businesses and future. Thus, if we don't have a way to sort things out, we may stagnate in life.

In yesterday's People at Work segment in Studio 23's Breakfast program, Bo Sanchez, a nationally renowned speaker and author of the book "Simply and live the good life," discussed how we can find purpose in work and life.

Below is the gist of his interview with program host Ria Tanjuatco and Inquirer's Corporate Relations Head Celine Madamba.

PaW: How can we connect with our passion, enthusiasm and vitality?

Bo: It boils down to three things: Knowing who you are, knowing why you're alive, and knowing what you stand for. In other words, when you know your core identity, your personal mission, and your deepest values, you experience wholeness. You have passion for life. You really live.

PaW: How can we find or create a job that fits us and our passion?

Bo: First, you need to know your personal mission in life. You talk, walk, breathe and sleep with this purpose everyday. You write down and read your dreams-dreams that you believe God created you to fulfill. When you look at life through the eyes of your sacred mission, it'll be easier to spot opportunities that will lead to its fulfillment. I believe that there are blessings everywhere that will lead to realizing our dreams. But the problem is that we don't see them. We don't see the jobs or businesses that will make us grow and live out our purposes in life. But they're there.

PaW: What can you suggest to people who are not passionate about anything?

Bo: Love. Serve. Give. Do small things that will make other people happier. And then pray. Because I believe that our sacred mission is always connected to love-and the only way to grow in love is by actually going out there and trying it. Like a muscle, love has to be used for it to grow. And when there is enough love in your heart, it will find means and ways to express it. And usually, we will end up searching for our God-given passions and gifts within us, so that we can love more effectively.

PaW: How can we overcome obstacles that have been holding us back in achieving your purpose?

Bo: Usually, obstacles are internal. We fail to achieve our purpose because we don't believe we're worthy to achieve them or that we don't have what it takes to reach them. It boils down to our faulty perception of identity. We need to manufacture an identity crisis, question what we believe in ourselves, and get a more accurate picture of who we are at the core of our beings: that we are God's children, loved and commissioned to do His glorious work on earth.

PaW: What if one is aware of his life's purpose but needs help actualizing it?

Bo: We need all the help we can get. No man can do it alone. We need mentors to lead the way. We need an inner circle of people who will encourage us, provide help, and pray for us until we make it. I thank God I have lots of mentors and a community of people who have supported me all the way to fulfill God's dreams for my life.

PaW: How can we discover and appreciate our unique gifts to the world?

Bo: Check three things. First, look at your gifts or raw materials. When God gives us our talents and skills, He does that for a purpose: so that we can fulfill His sacred mission for our lives. Second, look at your passions. When God sends us to a mission, He doesn't force us to go there. After discernment, you'll find out you want to go there! Your mission becomes a burning passion in your life; nothing can stop you. Finally, listen to His voice in your heart. If we only listen and open our eyes, we will see many rich ways God has spoken to us about our reason for being. We will discover He has guided us all along.

PaW: How do we connect our work to life's purpose?

Bo: If your work isn't connected to your life purpose, you'll be a very miserable person. How can you do something for eight hours or more each day and do so without any connection to your sacred mission in life and still be sane? Happy is the man who sees that his job and business isn't just for the money--but to help, bless, serve, and give life to others. How do you do that? Get to know your mission first. Feel its fire. And then, through its light, look at your job with new eyes. Can you do it for your sacred mission? If the answer is yes, you will do your job with a new power and joy. If you cannot, your heart will be restless until you find a job or business that will fulfill your life purpose.

SANCHEZ

PHOTO BY RICKY GARCIA

(Watch the People at Work segment every Tuesday at 7 a.m. on Studio 23's Breakfast show, which airs weekdays from 6:30 a.m. to 8 a.m. Breakfast's Ria Tanjuatco, Inquirer's Celine Madamba and McGraw Hill's Jenny Javier host the segment. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail optima@edsamail.com.ph.*)*

Automatic CENTRE

0% Interest Plans at Greenhills exhibit

New Year Shop 'n Swipe

Appliance & Furniture Exhibit

at the former Manila Bank Arcade,
Greenhills Shopping Center

Automatic Centre, the appliance store of choice of shoppers, offers at the onset of the New Year, an exciting appliance and furniture exhibit at its original location in the Greenhills Shopping Center.

The "**New Year Shop 'n Swipe Appliance & Furniture Exhibit**" is definitely an appliance and furniture shopping experience that appeals to budget-conscious consumers because top brands and popular appliances can be had at zero interest rates through the use of **Citibank credit card**.

Automatic Centre's appliance and furniture exhibit is a real shopper's dreamland — zero interest rates can be availed for top brands that are a dream to own, such as **Aiwa, Casio, Electrolux, Konka LG, Philips, Samsung, White Westinghouse and Whirlpool**.

The exhibit doesn't just stop with this inviting offer. More surprises are in store for patrons who will go to Automatic Centre. Situated at the former Manila Bank Arcade and fronting Ortigas Avenue, Automatic Centre is fully airconditioned and boasts of two floors of exhibition area. The store has enough space to offer the best in home appliances and furniture at very affordable prices. More than 30 brands are participating in the exhibit with their eye-catching displays of top-of-the-line products.

Enjoy also the lowest installment rates for your **Citibank credit card purchases**, plus more perks such as the **Home Theater Holiday** promo. With a minimum purchase of P1,000, you can win one of the three **Home Theater Systems** from LG, Philips and JVC in the Grand Draw on January 24.

The Automatic Centre Greenhills branch, which reopened in November last year, is happy news to residents in the Greenhills area and to other patrons of the popularly known biggest flea market for the middle and upper class in the country. It's like a déjà vu for the residents here as the Automatic Centre branch has become a landmark in the area having served customers in its original location for over 15 years. (Plus another nine years for the concurrent branch in Shoppesville Arcade.)

Hurry! Last five days to avail of special discounts and 0% interest privileges at the Automatic CENTRE Greenhills Appliance Exhibit.

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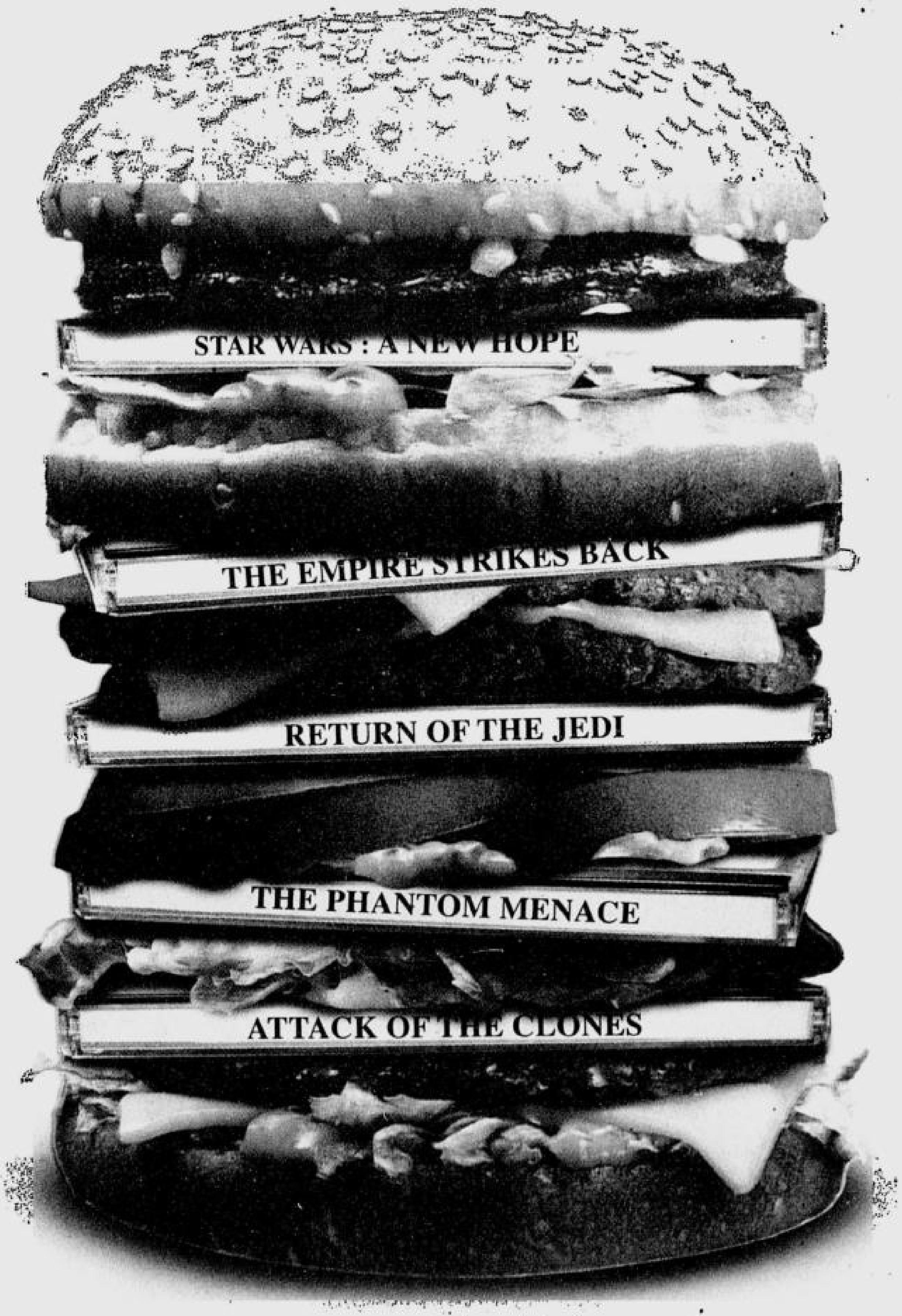

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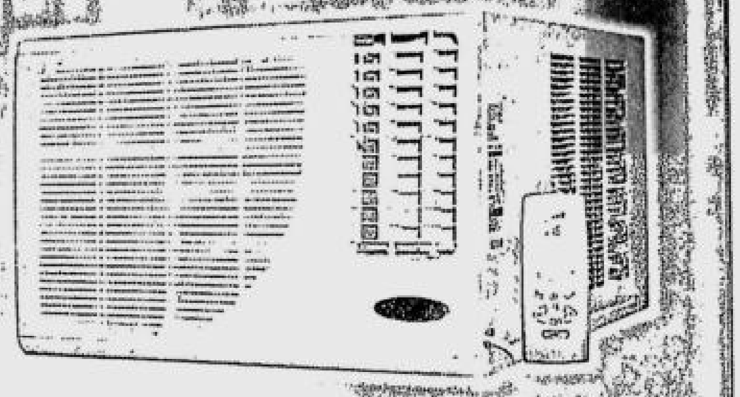

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New Year

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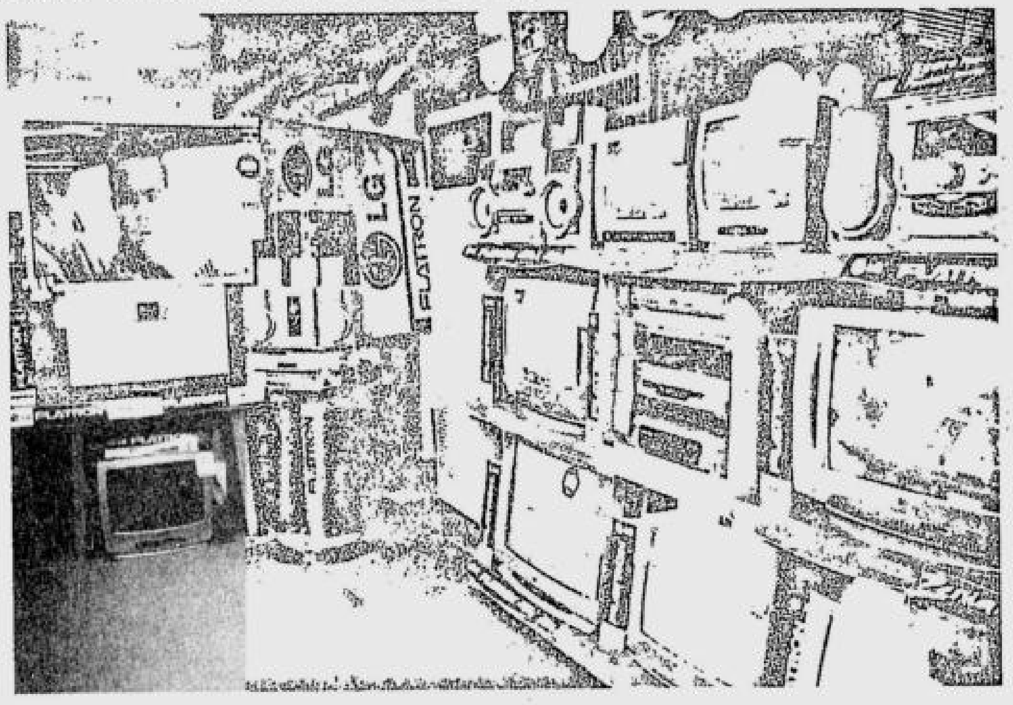
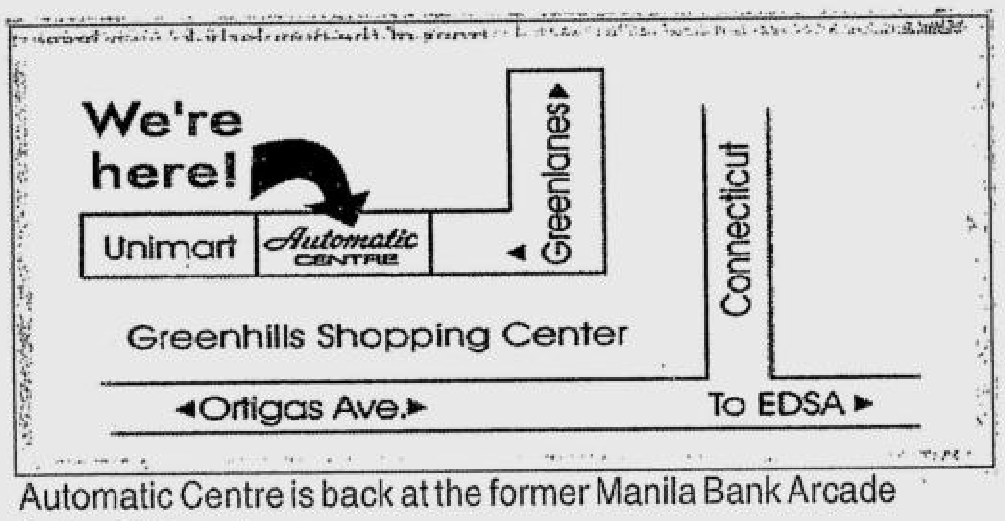
Appliance & Furniture Exhibit

Home Theater Holiday Raffle Promo--last 4 days for a chance to win in the Grand Draw!

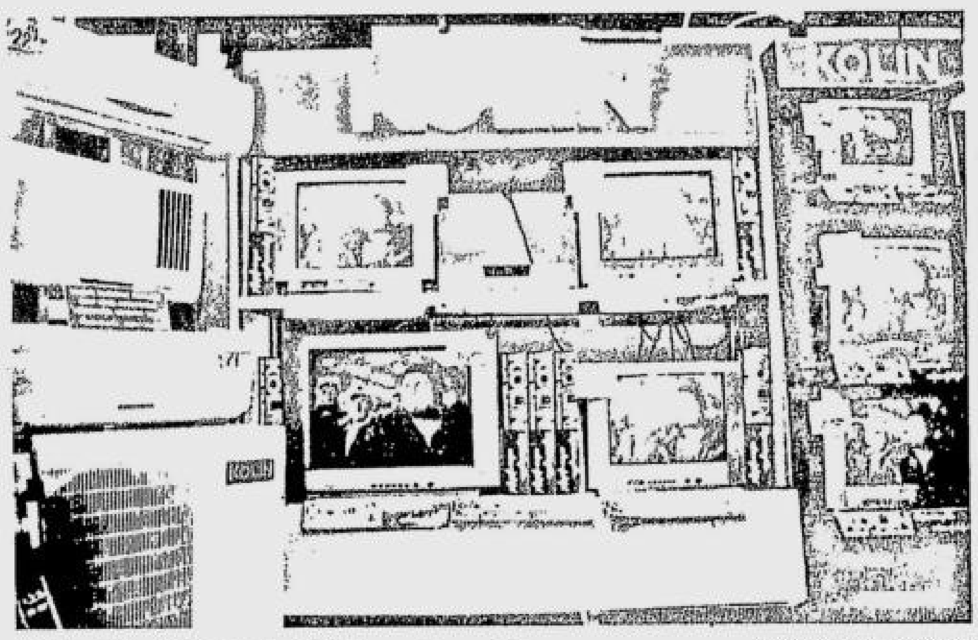
You still have four more days to shop in any Automatic Centre, Sogo or Blims branch in Metro Manila to have the chance to win one of the three Home Theater Systems from LG, Philips and JVC. A minimum purchase of P1,000 from any of the stores entitles a shopper to a raffle ticket. So hurry and shop to win!

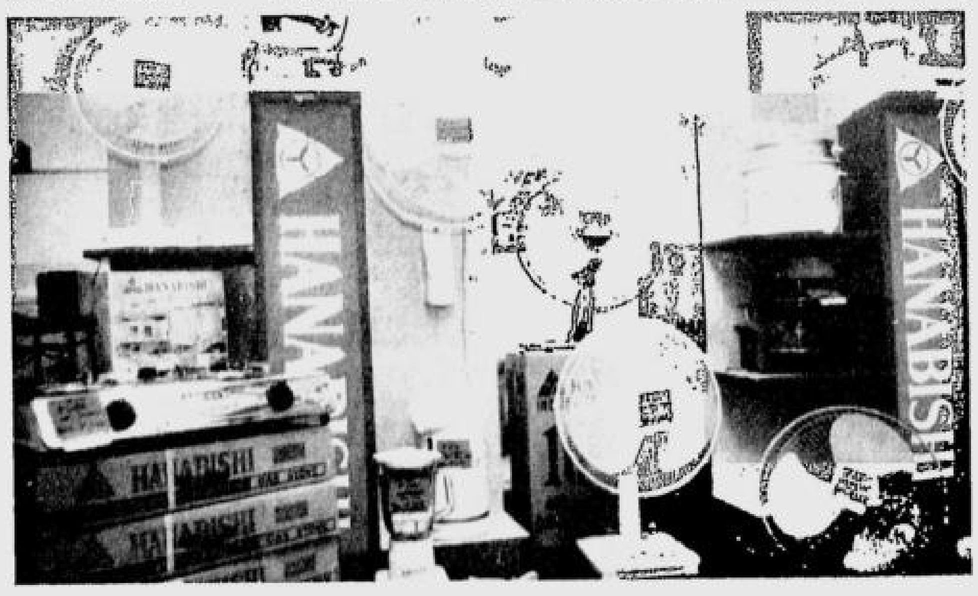




Automatic Centre is back at the former Manila Bank Arcade facing Ortigas Avenue

Greenhills Exhibit is open until February 2





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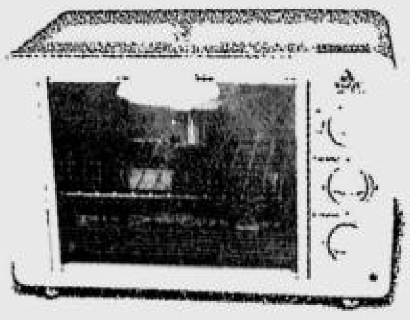

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BUSINESS

Oil stock EO out this week

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy announced yesterday that the implementing rules of Executive Order 134, which requires local oil firms and bulk suppliers to maintain a minimum inventory, would be out this week.

President Macapagal-Arroyo signed EO 134 on Oct. 14 last year in response to rising fears over war breaking out in the Middle East.

In an interview, Zenaida Monsada, director of the energy industry administration bureau, said the implementing rules would lay down how much stockpile oil firms should maintain.

EO 134 requires oil firms and bulk suppliers to maintain enough stocks to ensure a "continuous, adequate and stable" supply of petroleum products in case domestic and international events restrict the country's oil supply.

It takes note of emergencies, like terrorist attacks, war in the Middle East and in other regions supplying the Philippines with oil.

Most of the country's supply comes from the Middle East, its neighbors in Southeast Asia and Australia.

"The rules would not consider supply that is in transit to the Philippines as part of inventories," Monsada said.

Some political analysts believe war in the Middle East may break out in February.

American and British military forces have been building up in the Middle East in preparation for war with Iraq.

The United Nations has sent inspectors to look for Iraq's "weapons of mass destruction," but it has yet to find convincing evidence to justify an attack on the Arab state.

In October, the energy department said the country's total oil inventory could last up to 62 days but that this included supply that was still in the open seas.

Energy officials have initiated bilateral talks for more supply from the country's traditional sources as well as from untapped producers like Russia.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. said earlier this week he met with officials of Russia's OJSC Rosneft Oil Co. to firm up talks on a possible oil supply deal.

Banks buy $-linked bonds

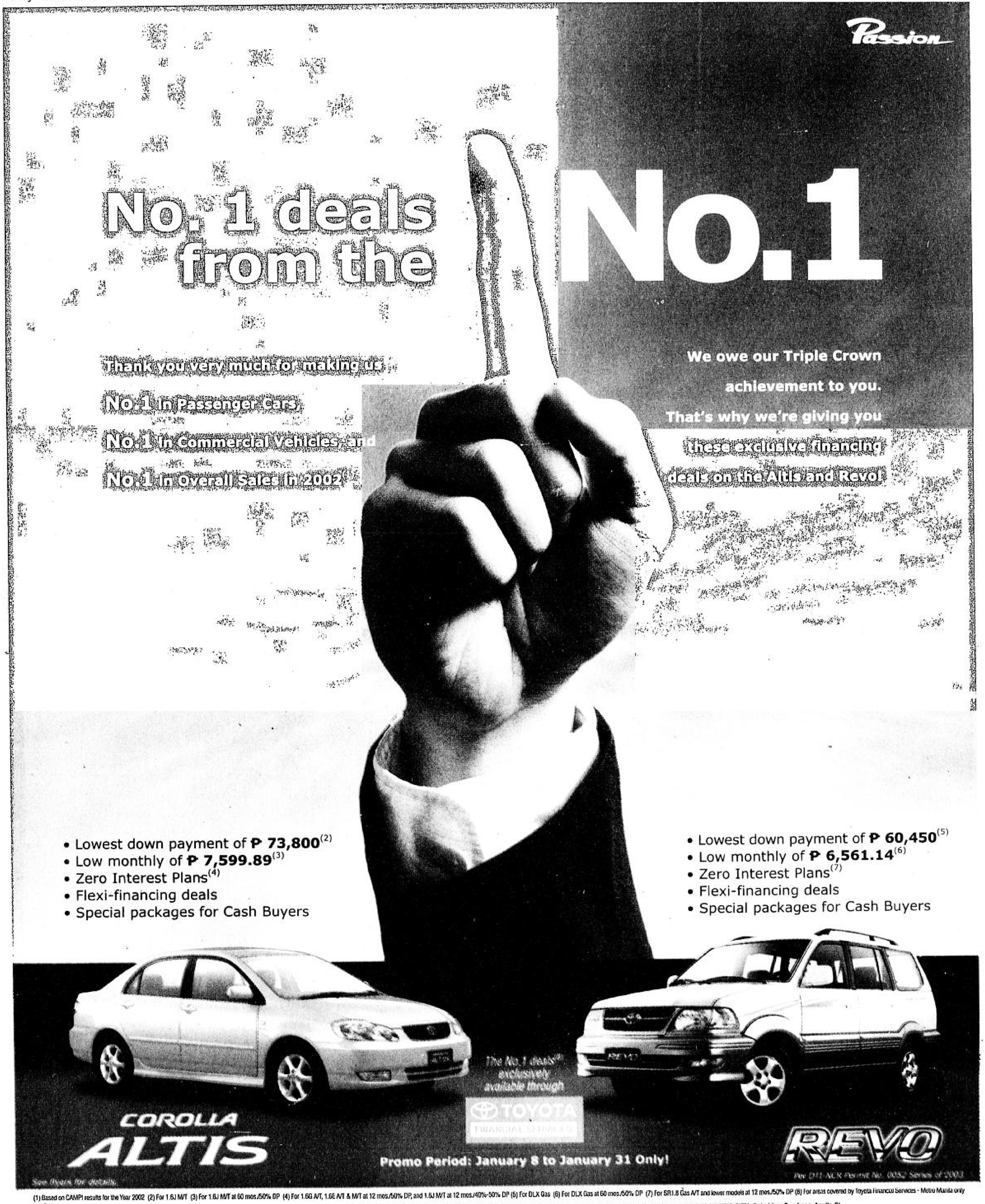
THIRTEEN banks gobbled up P5 billion worth of the dollar-linked bonds that the government is set to price today.

The huge demand is seen to lower slightly the state's cost of borrowings to 7.5 percent from 7.56 percent on the same bonds floated last month.

The bond price and the foreign exchange rate to be used in the float will be set in today's signing between the government and the buyers of the debt notes.

Deutsche Bank, one of the three underwriters, cornered P925 million worth of the dollar-linked notes followed by International Exchange Bank and Philippine National Bank with P615 million each.

Other buyers are Banco de Oro with P400 million; RCBC Capital, P300 million; Union Bank of the Philippines and Chinatrust Bank, with P250 million each; Allied Banking Corp., P200 million; Multinational Investment Bancorp., P150 million; Security Bank and Trust Co., P140 million; Bank of Commerce, P125 million, and Development Bank of the Philippines, P60 million. *Clarissa S. Batino*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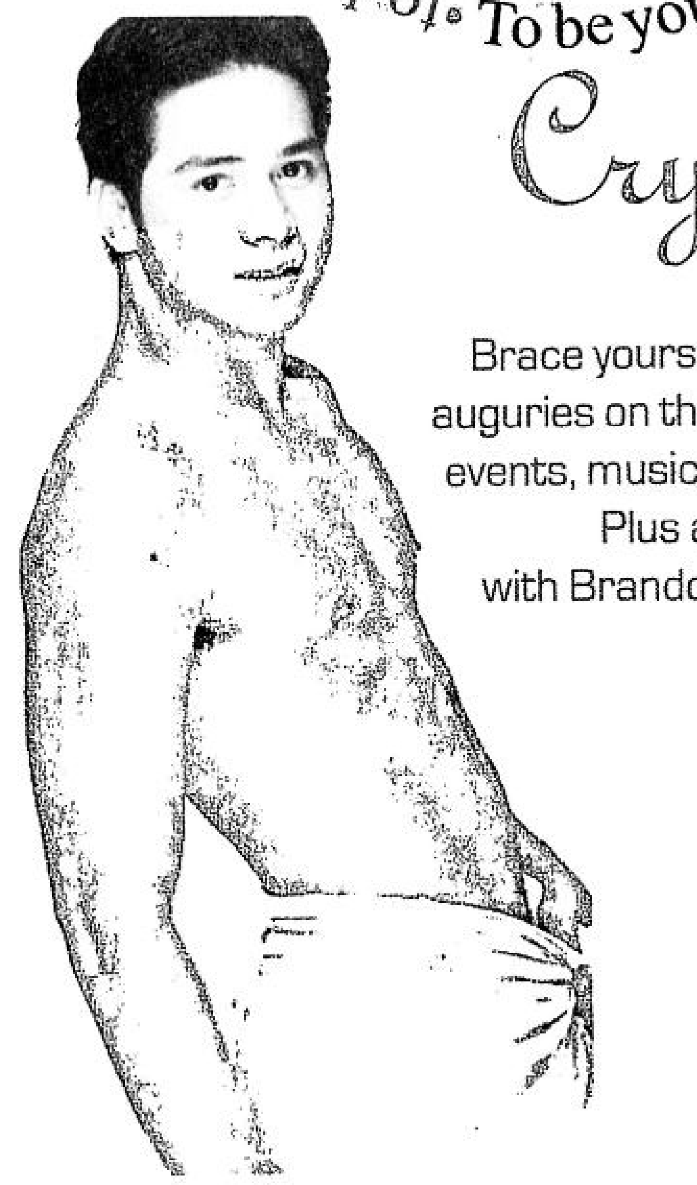
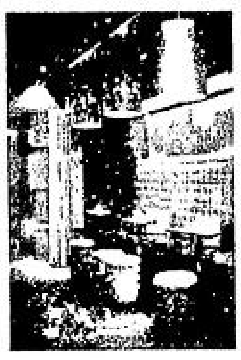


Crystal Ball 2003

Part 2

Brace yourself for spell-binding auguries on the new year in sports, events, music and entertainment. Plus an interview with Brandon Boyd of Incubus



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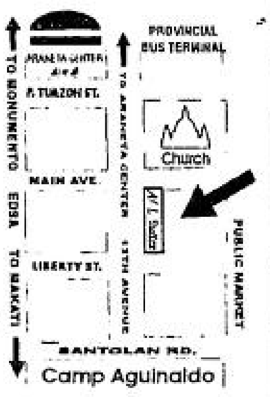

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PASTA OVERLOAD 1 Jan. 26, Sunday, 1:30-5:00 pm All-American Macaroni and Cheese with Ham, Tex-Mex Pasta, Pasta with Tiny Crab Fat Sauce (Taba ng Talangka), Chicken Tarragon, Spaghetti with Meatballs Tuition Fee - P1000

SOUP AND SANDWICH Feb. 3, Monday, 1:30-5:00 pm Pumpkin Soup, Chunky Corn and Potato Soup, Open Faced Roast Beef Sandwich, Tuna and Cream Cheese Spirals, Pinoy Panini, Lengua in Store Bought Pastry Shells Tuition Fee - P1000

GREAT RECIPES FOR CHICKEN 8 Feb. 5, Wednesday, 1:30-5:00 pm Chicken Wings with Black Beans and Garlic, Oriental Chicken with Fried Kropeck, Chicken Casserole in Mushroom Cream Sauce, Vietnamese Style Chicken Soup with Flat Rice Noodles, Deep Fried Stuffed Chicken Rolls Tuition Fee - P1000

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HANDS ON BAKING 3 Jan. 20, Monday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm A complete hands-on class for those who would like to make bread at home without preservatives and other chemicals. Everything is hand-kneaded the old fashioned way featuring the following bread basket favorites - French Bread, Pandesal, Sticky Buns, Rustic Potato Bread and Monay. Tuition Fee - P1000 (lunch included)

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HANDS ON BAKING 4 (new course) Feb. 7, Friday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm Bread making part 2, hands-on from start to finish! Mini Cinnamon Rolls, Siopao 3 ways (steamed, baked and fried), Mini Ensaymada with Parmesan Cheese, Cheese Rolls with Herbs and Spicy Sausage and Braided Raisin Loaf. Everything hand-kneaded except for Ensaymada and Cheese Rolls. Tuition Fee - P1000 (lunch included)

HANDS ON BAKING 5 (new course) Feb. 9, Sunday, 9:30 am to 5:30 pm A sampler of basic cakes and pastries for beginners - Choco Mocha Cake with Whipped Cream Frosting, Cappuccino Roulado with Mocha Buttercream and Praline and Mini Cream Puff with Orange Flavored Custard Tuition Fee - P1000 (lunch included)

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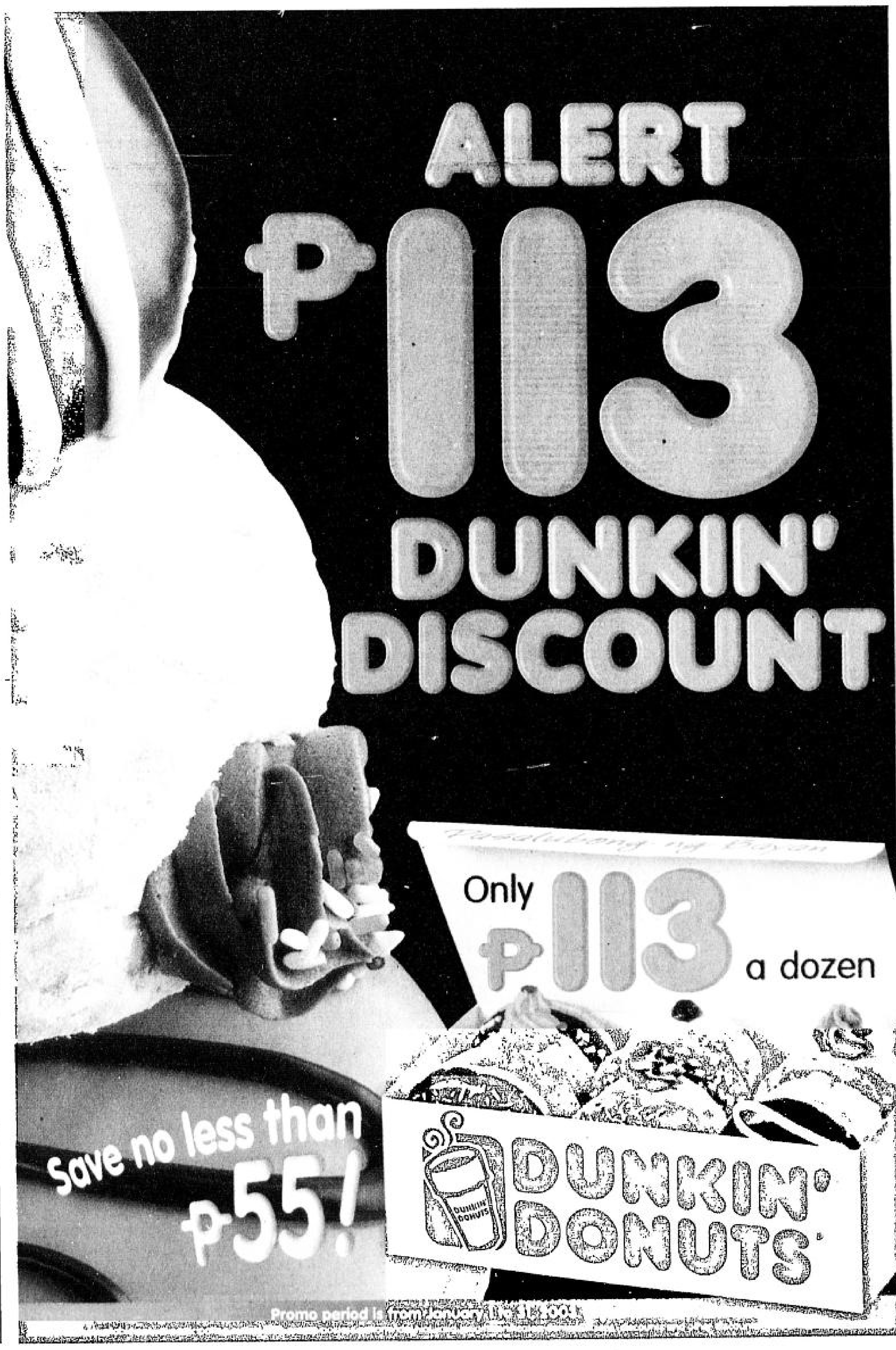
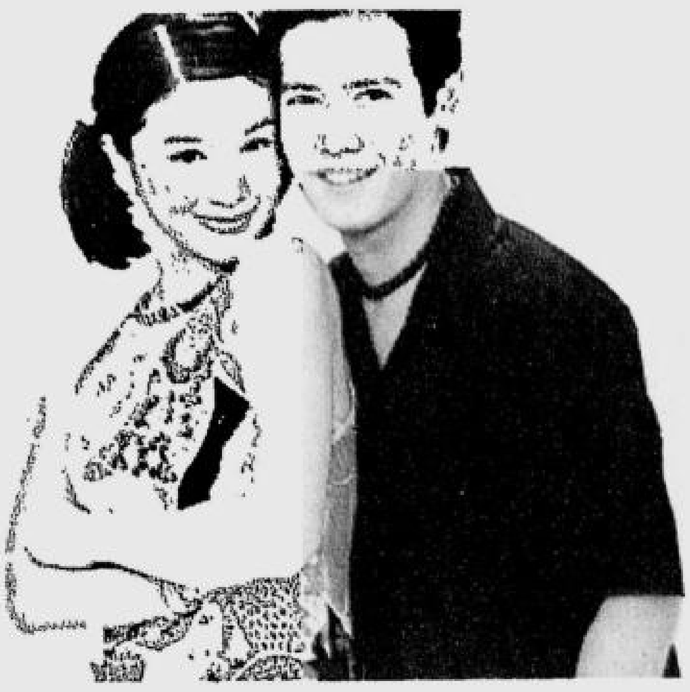


And their stars will shine in 2003



By Jules Alcantara
2bU! Correspondent

THERE are many ways of getting the legendary "15 minutes of fame" in this country.

You can hook up with a show-biz personality and make sure you get minute-by-minute mileage for being his/her significant other. You can wear skimpy outfits and say the most outlandish things, preferably filled with innuendo. Or you can start a fight with Mystica or Madame Auring.

But these days, the surest way to become a household name is to act in a hit *teleserye* or sitcom, be a commercial model or a college sports superstar.

Some, if not all, of the year 2003's watchable people, who have already begun the climb to stardom, did just that. Needless to say, they possess good looks and talent.

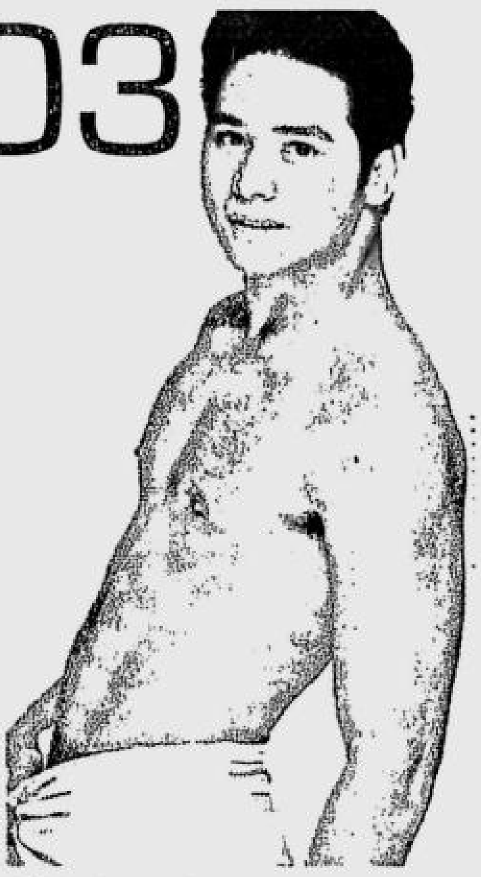
Heart Evangelista and John Pratts

Let's face it. One thing seems certain—2003 will definitely be the year of Evangelista and Pratts. With a new movie in the works and a hit Saturday afternoon sitcom, the two young heartthrobs are the year's surest bets for stardom.

People just can't get enough of the two. What sets the pair apart from the usual love team is that, individually, they each have their own following, aside from their team's. Just the two of them seem to be more than a match to the whole cast of the rival network's "Click," as gathered from viewers' feedback.

The stars appeal to all classes—both *colegialas* and the *masa*. They are adorable and cute but never annoying—a mean feat in itself.

Evangelista and Pratt's impending rise to superstardom can also be attributed to the fact that they are more than just eye candy. The two actually have what it takes to succeed—talent, something that's hard to find these days.



Piolo Pascual

By now, everyone's eyebrows are raised because of controversies during the recent Metro Manila Film Festival. One of the few things that was credible in the intrigue-filled competition was Piolo Pascual's best supporting actor award as Jules in the film version of Lualhati Bautista's "Dekada 70."

He was, to put it simply, quite awesome.

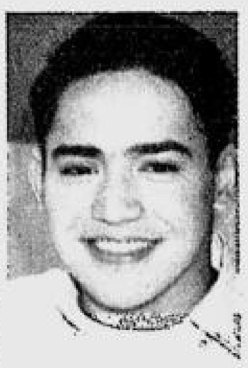
The movie proved that Judy Ann's favorite on-screen partner has both excellent acting skills and dashing looks.

Alessandra de Rossi

Assunta's feisty sister may lack her poise, but she surely makes up for it with lots of acting talent. The younger de Rossi's dusky looks and expressive eyes make her stick out like a sore thumb among the wannabes in her Saturday sitcom in GMA 7.

She does not apologize for who and what she is and that alone makes her stand out.

Paolo Contis



Someone give this boy the acting vehicle he so richly deserves! After shedding off his "Ang TV" comic image, fans of "Tabing Ilog" will surely attest to the fact that this boy can act and very well at that. He would have made a better "Gani" in "Dekada 70."

Versatility may very well be his middle name. He has already shown his comedic skills, but now the good-looking half-Italian is proving he can also hold his own in serious drama. He can also shift from dramatic lead to *kontrabida*.

Larry Fonacier

Two UAAP seasons ago, some fans claimed Larry Fonacier was a borderline "choker." But he proved his detractors wrong in Season 65 not only by being an important cog in the champion Ateneo Blue Eagles team but also by sharing finals Most Valuable Player honors with Enrico Villanueva.

Aficionados of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines declare that 2003 is Larry's year not only because fellow court generals Enrico Villanueva and Gec Chia have joined the professional ranks.

If his brilliant showing in the last UAAP basketball tournament is any indication, then this shy and well-mannered Blue Eagle is sure to soar in this year's most-awaited collegiate sports event.

Joseph Yeo

What is it with college basketball players who come from Xavier School? They seem to have spent every spare minute in high school perfecting their shooting skills, most especially three-pointers.

Whatever they do at Xavier, it certainly worked for Joseph Yeo, one of the outstanding guards of De La Salle University's Green Archers.

Many UAAP fans say Joseph Yeo has the potential to be the next Ren Ren Ritualo. Yeo showed he had the guts to make the crucial clutch shots, pretty much like the 2002 Philippine Basketball Association Rookie of the Year and former "King Archer," Ritualo.

Whether or not Yeo inherits the throne Ritualo vacated, remains to be seen. But Green Archer fans are waiting with bated breath for the next thrilling last-second shot from the good-looking and wily Chinese mestizo.

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my personal improvement list for this year

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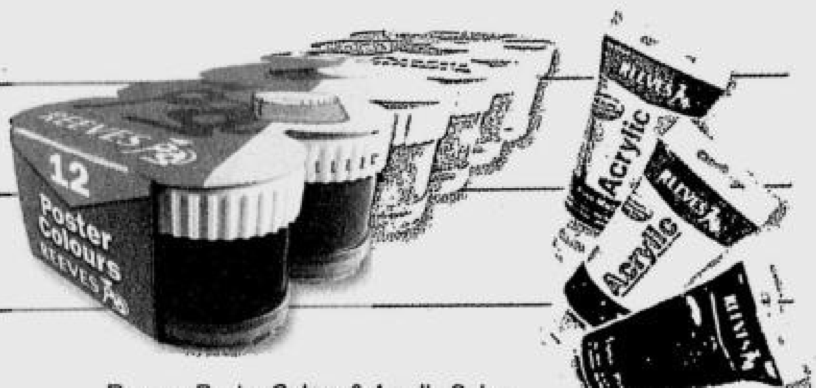
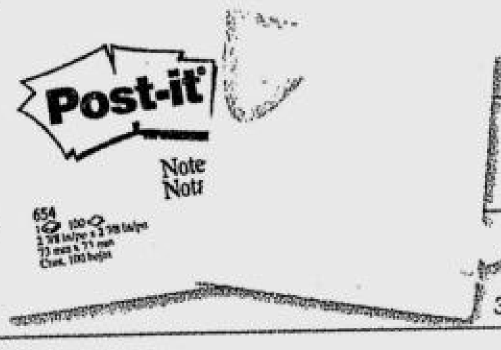

Reeves Poster Colour & Acrylic Color

- Read more! Keep updated with note worthy titles


3M Post-it Notes

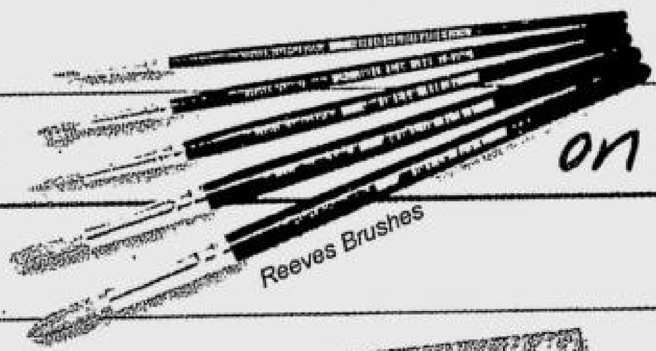
- Don't dwell on my mistakes and get stuck in the past

Best Buy Glue Sticks

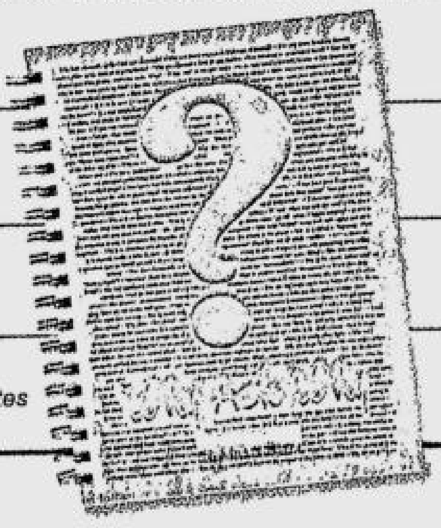
- Form good qualities like being punctual

Best Buy Neon Modelling Clay

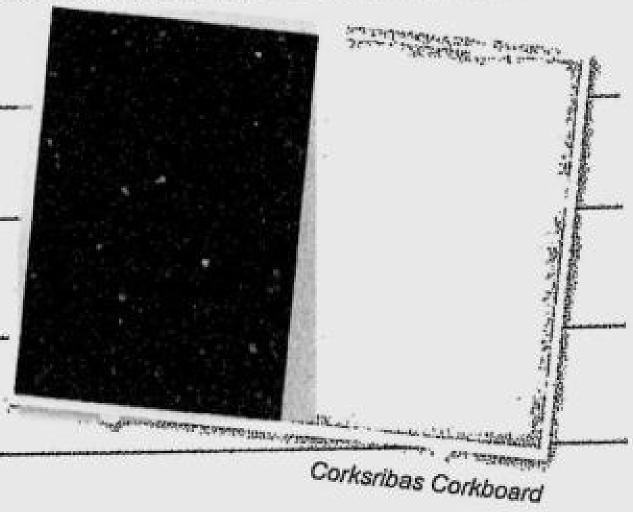
- Brush up on the latest trends


Reeves Brushes

- Take the time to write my thoughts


Stradmore Notes

- Pin down important details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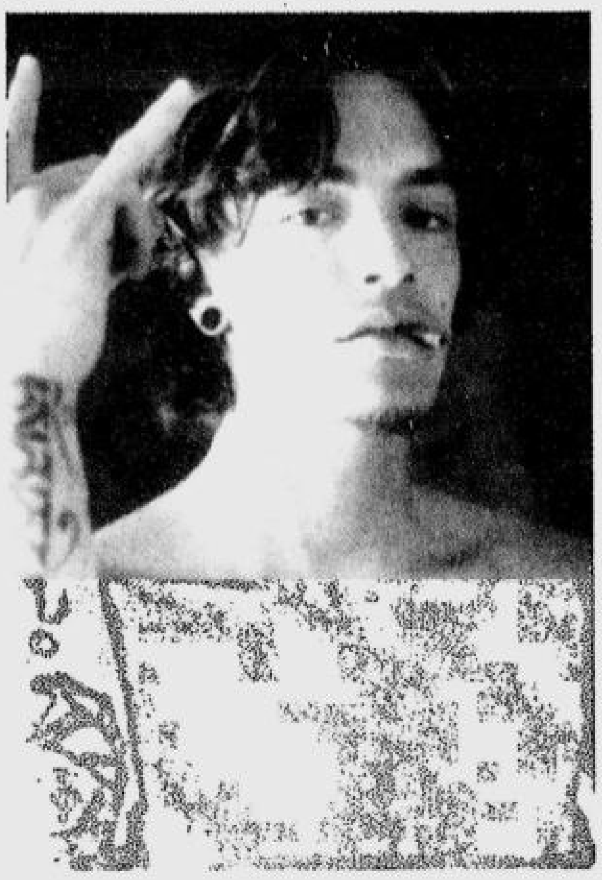

Jamming with Incubus

This year's best radio station meets this year's best band in an interview exclusive to 2bU!

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THEY began playing in small clubs and parties before they graduated to doing Hollywood gigs and opening for ego/hair bands. After releasing an indie LP titled "Fungus-Amongus," Incubus started making waves. Barely two years out of high school, they signed a recording deal and put out a six-song EP of demos.

Jag Jeans recently flew two lucky winners, Julie Bainto-Rondon and Arvin Abadilla, to the US to meet and watch Incubus perform live in Houston, Texas. Jag crossed the globe for front-row seats to one of the world's hottest rock bands and one of the sexiest rockers alive, Brandon Boyd. Also traveling on the wings of Jag (represented by Veng Taningco) were Roslyn Reyes of Sony Music and Miles of Magic 89.9, who conducted this interview.

Here are excerpts from the interview with Boyd, vocalist and percussionist, and Mike Einziger, guitarist:

Let's start with your musical influences. Brandon, I know there are a lot.

Brandon: Oh yeah, almost too many to name. My grandpa used to play Spanish songs and he played the guitar. My Mom would sit down on the piano every day and sing Broadway tunes. So, those are probably the biggest things that I was being exposed to—the music right in front of you, as in performing right in front of you... And (I have been influenced by) all the bands I listen to and the records I buy. The first record I ever bought was "The Cure," the second was "Iron Maidens," after that, "Primus," "Mr. Bungle." I'm a big Jeff Buckley fan. Bjork, PJ Harvey... If something catches me like I'm in the right mood, I'll sort of grab on to it. I like people who can sing or are very unique. I also like straight-up musicians like Primus, Phish or...

Umm, that's the kind of music that Mike and I actually had in common when we were growing up. It was almost like prog-tendecy bands like Phish, Primus and Mr. Bungle that were just, like, whacked and out there, and stuff you'll never hear on the radio.

Basically the same for you?

Mike: Yeah, pretty much. We grew up together. We met each other when we were about 9 years old. My musical upbringing was pretty similar to Brandon's... You know, my Mom's a singer and I was brought up listening to early jazz records of Dina Shore and Ella Fitzgerald.

I found out that "Nice to Know You" was actually about your finger falling asleep... your hand. (Laughs) Among all your songs, what's your personal favorite?

B: (Laughs) I think I confuse a lot of people about that song. They say, "Hey, that is a break-up song." Maybe we should just leave it as a break-up song. That's what it's coming to. I was sick of explaining it. What was your question again?

Your favorite songs, the top three.

B: That changes all the time.

Really? As you make more albums?

B: We play our songs every night so depending on the mood or something.

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THE INCUBUS. Closet exhibitionists.

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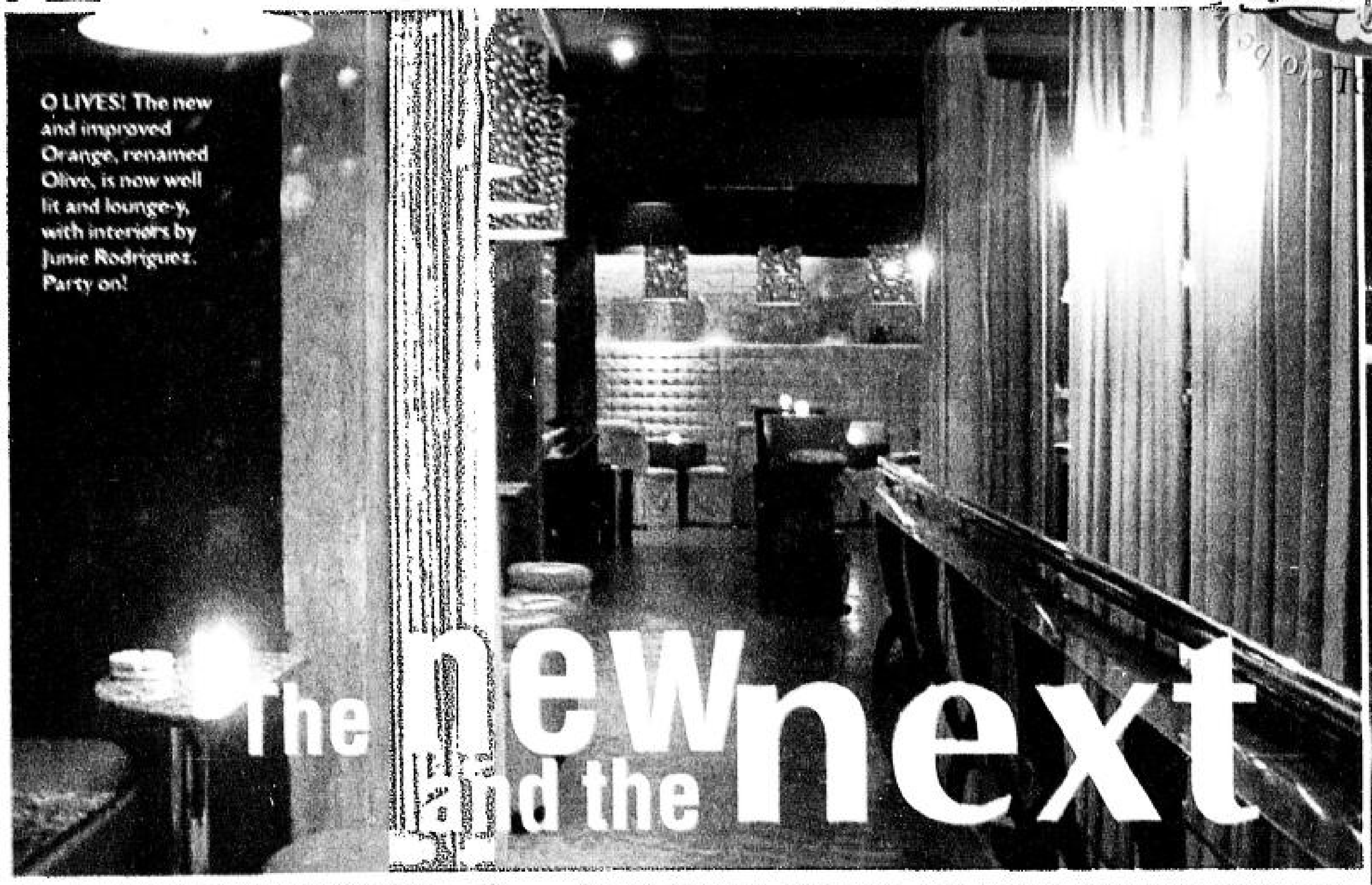
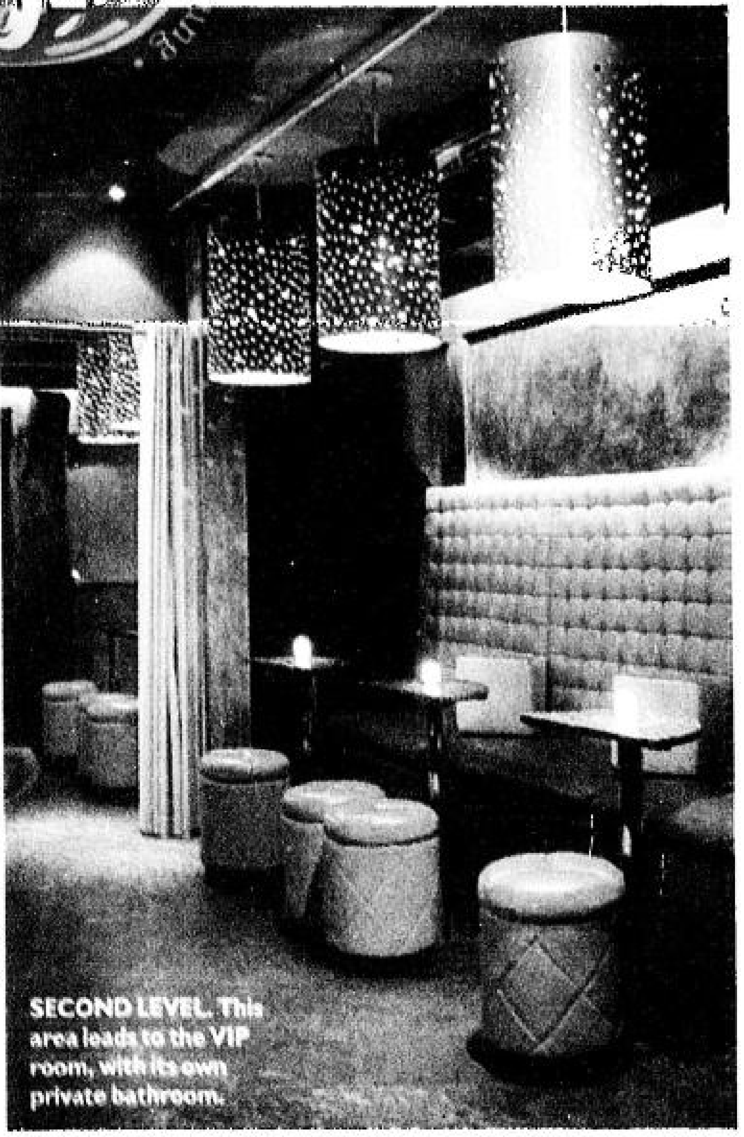


O LIVES! The new and improved Orange, renamed Olive, is now well lit and lounge-y, with interiors by Junie Rodriguez. Party on!

The new and the next



SECOND LEVEL. This area leads to the VIP room, with its own private bathroom.

NOVALOUNGE, as played by dance music proponent Edge Pamute of BBC at the Rockwell helipad New Year's party by Studio 23

WHAT'S in store this year for the party scene? Are theme parties still going to be in vogue? What about color coding and group birthday bashes? Will Makati, Rockwell, Libis or Malate be the place to be in? The scene is ripe for change and growth—so take your pick.

Tim Yap

My crystal ball sees a steady shift in revelry trends this year. Last year was the year of chill, R&B, raves (yawn!), and theme parties. This will be the year to bend the rules, according to my trusted chronicles. People who thrive on order will be threatened. The open-minded will have a ball!

In music, there is a new sound called "Novalounge," which is fast gaining popularity in the global dance scene. Best described as a mix of quality, Latin and jazz-tinged bossa, broken and nu-jazz beats, either new or classic, Novalounge evokes an overall feeling of sexiness and good vibe.

(Another one that will be hot, hot, hot this year is soulful house, as introduced by Miguel Migs' Naked Music and followed up by Hed Kandi, of Beach House and Disco Kandi series.)

Novalounge mushroomed first in the trend capitals of Soho, Munich, Notting Hill, Greenwich, Paris, Shibuya and Ibiza. It has largely emerged from its underground status. Going beyond clubs, it is now available in CD compilations and aired on radio in Germany, UK and the US.

In Manila, Novalounge was first heard when DJ Mr. King of Bar Rumba, London played at the Rockwell helipad during last New Year's eve. BBC's Edge Pamute is the proponent of this new sound, which he plays at various hip spots this side of the city.

The DJ spotlight will shift to new names in the marquee—Chip dela Calzada, Myk Tolentino, Jon and Mark Naval, Jay Tengco, Jade, Roman Mojica, Patch, Joel Tantoco, Robby Mananquil and Mike Constantino—all of whom are fast gaining ground and whose cultured clout knows good music from bad. Book them now before everybody else does!

Partyphiles will tend to gravitate toward the "noisiest" of hip spots, with the new Greenbelt (with its 1,001 choices) leading the pack in hype value.

In order to keep up, spots not in the central Ayala circle have to beef up their creative juices and marketing muscle to lure the crowds. Prime examples are Flute, Green Planet, Mati and Ebisu in Makati, Acquario and Fidel in Malate and The Basement and Rockstar in Libis.

Kuh Ledesma is reopening a new Republic of Malate this year while KC Montero is putting up his own club called Industry on Filmore Street near Cash n' Carry. Olive (the former 78 Orange) is now open with rejuvenated orange-hued interiors and aims to attract an earlier crowd of partyphiles. Its photos appear on this page.

The scene needs more daring movers who are willing to take the risk and put up establishments even in places that are not easily accessible.

The underground scene is a bit lagging behind. New York's meat packing district has become the "it spot," as a hipster's haven away from tired and commercial venues in the city that never sleeps.

Last year, the martini reigned supreme, with every hipster chugging a cosmo, coco-lychee martini, a Raj Royale, a choco-tini, and every other "tini" weeny possible. This year's concoctions will focus on the hard-edged—such as Porch's slammer, Absinthe, and the smooth Skyy Vodka with anything, and Chivas with anything—the more complicated the concoction, the better.

Uptown, downtown

In social studies, what makes a great mix is the combination of uptown chic and downtown attitude. ABG's had it, Insomnia had it, Orange had it.

Of late, the "uptown" side of the scene is becoming too saturated, with every establishment catering to this elusive but fickle AB set: the same clothes, the same faces and the same surnames.

Downtown movers have been so busy mingling with the "uptowners" that the scene has become diluted, and sometimes boring.

Where are the Mimi and Juliet Tans, the Ronald Pasions, Brando Umalis and their Warpies, the Hebe Hortendorps, Asli Aslanians, Erich Edralins, Miko Valenzuelas, John Glenns of this age?

The party scene needs new blood. A new form of osmosis has to take place, with both uptown and downtown movers seeking the up-and-coming, excited new set to revitalize and give it new ideas. In one word, "fresh."

The bohemians have fled to different parts of Quezon City, in bars where a new scene that is interested in new music, art, culture and fashion is being cultivated.

In nocturnal fashion, expect names like Mich Dulce (who is now designer for Fila, aside from having her own studio and couture line), Alex Pigao (last year's fashion grand slammer who is off to Milan on a study grant), Kenneth Chua (doing womenswear for Tyler) and Kate Torralba (who did most of Tessa Valdes' outfits for the Famous cruise) to go up, up and away!

2003 will be about fluidity. People will want the freedom to be able to flow. Water. Liquid. Liquidity. Theme parties will reflect this smooth transition of freedom and choice.

Life may not be the party we hope for, but while we're here, we may as well dance! Enjoy the year, partyphiles.

DANCETERIA. Drink your [illegible] down your cocktail, then [illegible] you drop at hot hipspot Olive.

PARTY MIX. Uptown chic plus downtown attitude equals hip vibe. Scene movers and shakers, time for some action.

The rule in 2003 is—no rule! The pendulum will swing to the other extreme, turning the scene upside down

DJ MARQUEE. Anthony Kierulf takes the reins at the Olive booth.

Beauty indulgences you might want to enjoy

ILLUSTRATION STEPH BRAVO

WOULDN'T it be a blast waking up to a sack-ful of what really matters in this highly *kikay* day and age? Imagine if we all got the best (not to mention expensive) vanity loot we've been hankering for all year long.

Lovely fantasy, but let's all get real. The closest we can get to this *kikay* pot of gold is by saving up (or holding on to all the Christmas cash gifts from *ninong* and *ninang*) for a couple of beauty indulgences. I've made a list of the freshest picks from beauty counters everywhere to help you make your choices.

Estee Lauder Optimizer Repair Boosting Lotion. The latest skin-care technology in a bottle, it boosts the effects of whatever treatments you are using on your skin for quicker results.

Prescriptives Super Line Preventor +. Coming from a trusted name in beauty, you might have to give up a new pair of jeans for this mega-serum, but the suppleness it gives to skin can convince you that the aged denims in your closet are still serviceable.

Lush Enchanted Eye Cream. A blend of nature's best essences and oils, this yummy-smelling eye cream from beauty deli Lush gets rid of fine lines and dark circles in a flash.

Nars Multiple. A lean, mean, multitasking machine for the *kikay* who doesn't have an extra minute to spare in front of a mirror but wants to look fab, it delivers color on every skin surface imaginable. It comes in a cocktail of colors for both day and night.

La Prairie Skin Caviar Concealer Foundation with SPF 15. The foundation/concealer holds the promise of smooth, clear complexion.

Les Perles de Chanel in Surprises. This compact includes ultra-girlish but definitely glam pink pearls for highlighting strategic places of the face.

Nars Palette in Last Dance. Conveniently packed in a sleek, black, movie-star palette, the colors in the handy kit easily go from day to night with just a sweep of Night Fever shadow, or an extra dusting of the gold-tinged Orgasm blush. The operative description: limited edition. Go grab one before the entire fashionista crowd hoards them.

Lora Gabol

Kerastase Oleo-Relax Line. Consisting of a shampoo, hair mask, and leave-on conditioner, this amazing hair-care innovation has helped a lot of frizzy-haired friends go from *walis*-like to Pantene-model worthy locks.

Laura Mercier Bronzing Powder. Although I've always preferred cream and gel formulations over powder for blush, Laura Mercier has made a dewy finish for powder blush possible with this pot of color that screams "woman."

Shu Uemura Lash Curler. Everybody's raving about it for one simple reason—it works. If all the best makeup masters swear by it, why shouldn't you?

Sue Devitt Eye Intensifier. Steam up your stare with this easy-to-smudge eye pencil from Sue Devitt's recently introduced cosmetics line. Line the roots of your lashes for instant evening drama and mystery.

Bobbi Brown Shimmer Gloss Stick. For irresistibly kissable lips, pick one (or all, if you can afford it) of Bobbi Brown's luscious take on lip gloss. My fave? Rose Sugar Shimmer for a natural yet striking effect.

Recently, I was given Shu Uemura skin-care products. Their Depsea Water in Rose, UV Underbase and High Performance Balancing Cleansing Oils did not disappoint.

My perpetually dry skin felt a much-needed surge of moisture (the temperature drop did havoc to my complexion) after cleansing with the balancing oil, the Enriched variety (also comes in Light and Classic). I spritzed on the Depsea Water before moisturizing, wanting to boost the dewy feeling I already had after cleansing. My face felt suppler and refreshed. I believe this bottle of miracle H20 would be handy as well as a mid-day waker-upper for the face.

I slathered on an ample amount of the UV Underbase with SPF 17 before putting on foundation, but the primer turned out better than I imagined. My skin felt smoother, and all I needed was a dusting of loose powder to make me pretty for the day.

Shu Uemura, Prescriptives, Estee Lauder, Bobbi Brown, Chanel, and La Prairie are available at Rustan's; Lush at Rockwell Power Plant, Greenbelt 3; Nars, Laura Mercier at Essences; Sue Devitt at Beauty Bar; Kerastase in fine salons in Manila.

E-mail the author at pdi_vanityfare@hotmail.com

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The sounds of music in 2003

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

OF COURSE, we can stare into the crystal ball and ask tarot readers if our fave bands will sell this year, but chances are your garden-variety musician would probably have more predictions for this year's music industry than Madame Petra of Quiapo. Besides, who knows the industry better than the artists themselves?

We ask musicians, record companies, DJs and all those in-the-know about what 2003 has in store for music—the sounds radio will play, what record companies will face and how homemade-music will rock.

Big-band type of music like Frank Sinatra's (will dominate). I really love Frank Sinatra, especially the duets album!—**Jong, Bridge**

There will be less talent on the scene and more boob-swinging bold stars who will record their tasteless, crappy, unoriginal songs. And the industry will still be the same if piracy is not stopped.—**Glenn, Monsterbot**

With the deepening recession in the US and war in the Middle East, rock will continue to reign and rain! But there will be all kinds, from chick rock to angry rock! Pop-hop or commercialized hip-hop will replace boybands. Music will also become as disposable and accessible as cellcards. This is because companies under siege will throw everything in, including the kitchen sink. At least every artist and genre will at last have their 15 minutes of fame!—**Lizza Nakpil**

Hip-hop and everything that surrounds it like R&B and rap will still be influential, although I think it's just a phase. It'll still go back to the basic Pinoy-real-life issue type of songs that everybody loves but hates to admit. [There will be] more independent artists in the band scene so more experimental stuff, also.— **Japs Sergio, Rivermaya**

Two trends: eclecticism and rediscovery. This generation of musicians grew up listening to all kinds of music, and they're learning to use different influences in creating their own sound. And everyone's rediscovering "old" genres like jazz and blues. Old is definitely new.—**Kristine Fonacier, MTV INK editor in chief**

Music will still be the same except everything will be indie and record companies will lose their hold over the industry.—**Justin Sunico, Ciudad**

It's going to be one of the most diverse. A lot of bands are releasing albums this year. This translates to a healthy and growing music industry.— **Zach Lucero, Imago**

In the local scene, the bands playing original music will definitely enjoy a wider audience, thanks to the pioneer indie bands and the stations playing their music. The Filipino listener will really get to hear different kinds of music.—**Jon Jon Jose, A Murder of Crows**

Lots of people say rock is dying. But then bands like Slapshock prove them wrong. There is an abundance of talent in Pinoy music. Because of the technology we have now, like home recording, artists now have easier ways to record albums. And with lots of bands releasing albums this year, I think we're going to have a lot of fun this year.—**Ebe Dance, Sugarfree**

New bands like Sugarfree and Boldstar will make noise. Because more kids will turn their ears to hooky, melodic rock.—**Jett Pangan, The Dawn**

People will probably listen to more stuff outside the rap-metal genre… they'd probably be more open to other bands and even other genres of music.—**Odin Fernandez, The Happy Meals**

No matter how complex or simplistic music will turn out, its course will be progressive. I also believe (music will go the way of) simplicity (and become) more accessible.—**Nino Mendoza, Blue Jean Junkies**

The female voice will dominate rock. There will be guitar-based and -driven tunes. There will be free-form and "unformula-ic" music.—**Sherwin Reyes, A Murder of Crows**

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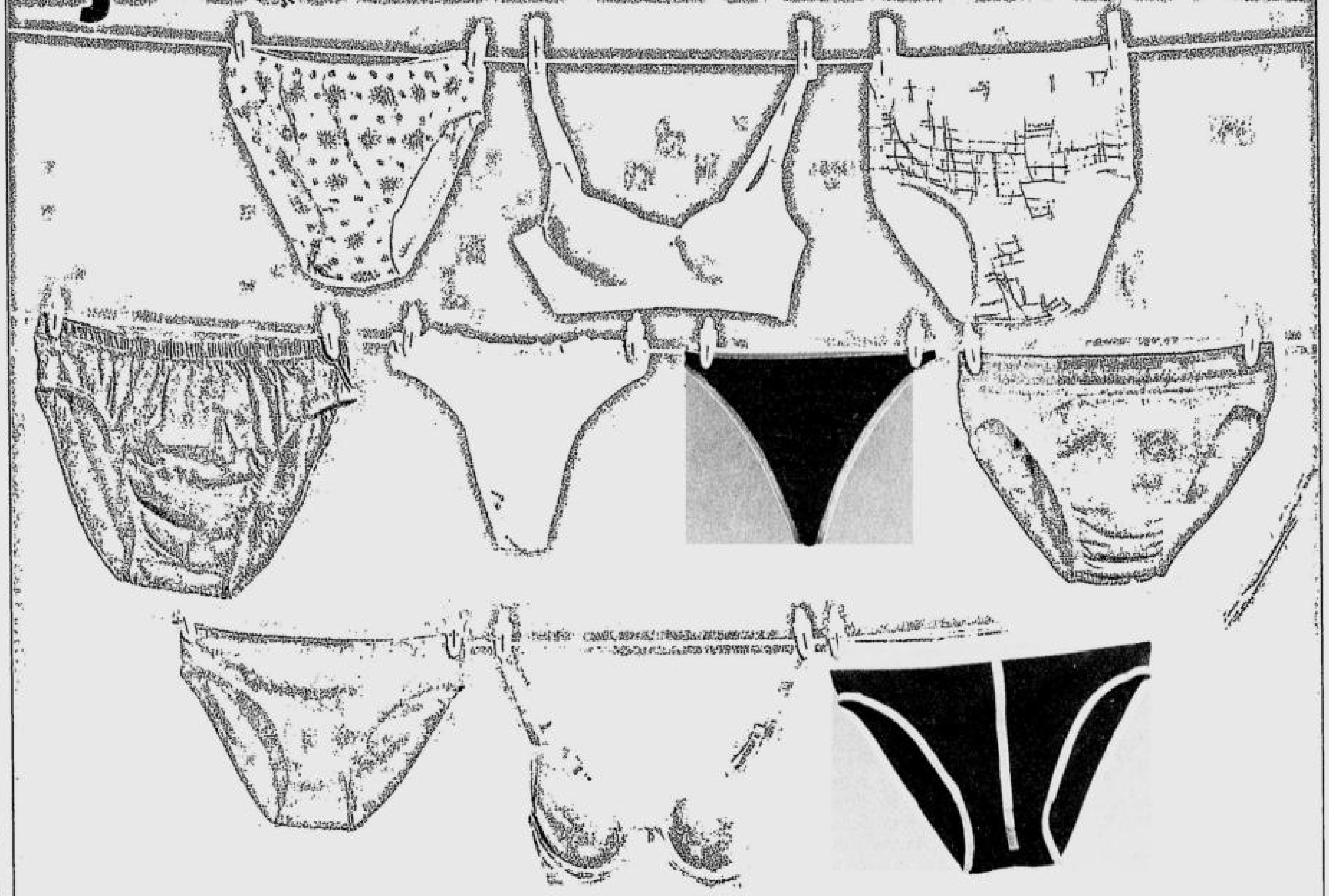

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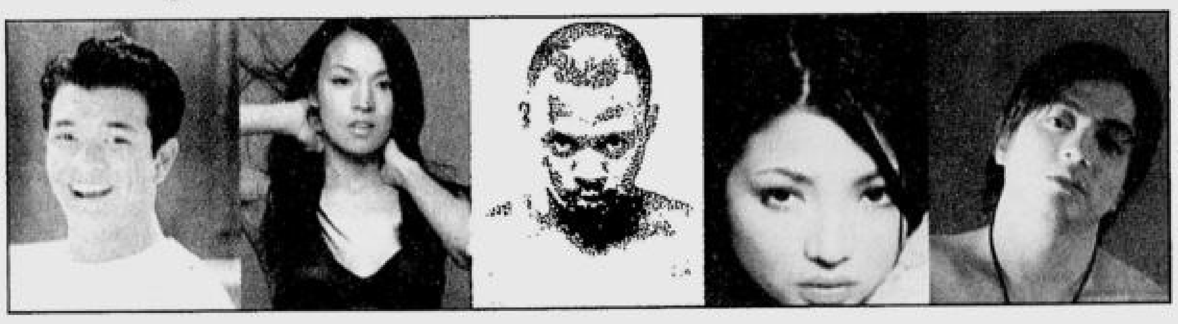
Wendell Ramos
RDS Ermita, 3 pm



January 24
Maui Taylor
RDS Ermita, 5 pm
January 25
Aubrey Miles
RDS Galleria, 3 pm
January 26
Jericho Rosales
RDS Galleria, 4 pm
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REVITALIZE BONDING MOMENTS THIS NEW YEAR

It is a brand new year. And it only means two things - out with the old, and in with the new. Out with the old bad habits and in with the totally new more matured me.

Crossing time lines always excites me, a lot of fresh ideas to look forward to - new clothes, new gadgets, new hangouts, or probably new hairstyles. One cool stuff is the New Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean for active hair, which makes me and my friends confident to try new trends and upcoming trails or adventures.

Oh, my friends. We had tons of memories for the past years. We fought, we made up, and we fought again, and learned more and more about each other. We went through the best times and the worse. But one thing's for sure, through heartaches and cramming, through every laughter, and tear, we were there; glued to each other, and we never left anybody without a shoulder to cry on.

I could already hear you singing "Through the Years" but that, pretty much, spells out our bonding. We were there, together, no matter what, however. And stepping into this New Year only gets us even more enthusiastic with whatever trials and triumphs we might have because surely, it will make us more understanding and loyal towards each other. Now we can just laugh at our petty quarrels and boo-boo's.

What we've learned in the past year, is that the important thing about friendship in taking a step towards a new journey is to keep the wisdom gained in every fall and hopeful of the dreams ahead. Hand in hand we stride through every obstacle keeping our laughter in our memory treasure. One day, we can show to the world, bonding is not just about gimmicks and all out fun; rather, it is the unity of souls dwelling in different bodies. Sort of like a friendship – marriage, unbreakable.

Indeed, it is the time to revitalize ourselves. Out with the old, and in with the new. Like the new Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean for active hair, which will surely keep our hair bonded through trying times. It's our official hair gadget. We literally just flip our smooth hair with whatever stress or heat! It is fun being young, we stay active and we live our lives the best we can.

I am sure there are still a lot of bigger things to come – times that will truly test our friendship. Priorities, choices, decisions, all of which might hurt or heal a friend. But we will continue to live as friends, and everyday with stronger bonds. Our friendship already placed a mark in our hearts, something we can't live without.

ADVT

Para walang lagkit,
use Sunsilk Revitalizing Clean.

SUNSILK

Jamming with Incubus

From page D1

M: I can pick three.

B: Really?

M: That I enjoy most playing or listening to? For me, they're almost the same but "Aqueous Transmission" is one of my favorites. "Just a Phase" and all the songs of "Morning View" because that's our current album and I like it the most. And, probably "11 a.m."

B: For me, "Just a Phase," "Bathe In My Snot" and "Blood on the Ground." Those are the songs that we never play. They're the first songs we ever wrote as a band and they are like, god-awful.

M: Actually, the first song we wrote as a band was "Love Sick," and it was so awful. You just could not even imagine (laughs).

So when you look back sometimes, you cringe?

B: Oh, I get sick... My palms start to sweat if someone puts on our old, early records. I'll leave the room 'cause that is just really difficult for me to listen to.

I read about something funny... that you actually got tricked into posing naked for a magazine.

M: That didn't take much of a trick.

Really! You just posed naked with your guitar?

B: Everybody in our band is a closet exhibitionist.

M: I'm pretty sure some of them are naked tonight. But it didn't take much coaxing for me to get out of my skivvies.

A lot of fans in the Philippines are women, and a lot of them have e-mailed me to ask if you guys are still available?

B: Available?

M: Our music is available. You can go to the store and pick them... (smiles) Ummm, I think we have girlfriends. I have a girlfriend!

B: Let's answer their question with another question. Do they have boyfriends?

The boyfriends are also fans of yours.

B: Okay.

BRANDON BOYD. Cringes at the thought of their early records.

Philippine sports in 2003

By Dennis U. Eroa

MAKING predictions is easy.

What is hard is explaining your wrong forecasts. The only sure thing is that sporting year 2003, like the year just passed, will be full of suspense and surprises.

Still, I'm going to predict (brace yourself) what's going to happen in the next 11 months or so. You'll probably ask why. The answer is simple: This is a free country, make that a basketball-crazy free country.

An Ateneo-La Salle III sequel in the UAAP remains a possibility. Mike "the Cool Cat" Cortez and Enrico Villanueva will not be around to help the Green Archers and Blue Eagles (respectively) make the bucket, but not to worry. Both De La Salle and Ateneo de Manila universities are known for their no-nonsense recruitment drives. Expect them to parade new Villanuevas and Cortezes this year.

The all-powerful board of the University Athletic Association of the Philippines, known for its "icy" attitude toward the press, will finally see the light with the entry of dynamic members, who realize the importance of the media.

Re-emerging powers

A third Ateneo-La Salle showdown, however, is going to be threatened seriously by University of the East (UE) and Far Eastern University (FEU), the league's re-emerging powers.

After winning the Bantay Bata and the Champion League tournaments, the UE Red Warriors are in shape to bring back the glory years of the '80s.

Although Ronald Tubid has joined the pro ranks, UE continues to pack a knockout punch with slam-dunking KJ Canaleta, triggerman James Yap and the likes of Paul Artadi, Olan Omiping and Paolo Hubalde.

And the FEU Tamaraws? Leo Avenido is now making waves as a Coca Cola Tiger and Dennis Miranda has completed his playing year. But expect FEU to come out with new recruits while pinning its hopes mainly on its "stratospheric ceiling."

The Philippine Basketball Association (PBA), though not lacking in stars, can expect rough sailing, primarily because of the weak economy. Television coverage is proving to be a headache due to the large price tag. PBA fans, however, can expect fast and furious action a la Philippine Basketball League (PBL) and UAAP with the entry of exciting dribblers.

The Tigers, with their Chot Reyes-inspired game, will continue to draw the crowd. In contrast, Ginebra, which ruled the league during the time of the Big J, will slowly lose its bite unless Allan Caidic, who got the blessings of Ginebra bigwigs, manages to steer the Kings to gloryland.

San Miguel, Alaska, Purefoods, Sta. Lucia and Talk N' Text remain title favorites but they need to squeeze the best from their superstars, who earn huge paychecks (arrrgh!) doing nothing but jog around the court, make one dazzling move or simply watch younger, faster and heftier players glide in front of them for a "twinner."

Ren-Ren Ritualo, the PBA's Rookie of the Year, exemplifies the attitude of Batch 2003: deadly, hardworking and intense. Ritualo, a star from La Salle's bemedalled basketball factory, will continue to terrorize the opposition with his shooting hands, bringing back to mind a young Caidic.

The PBL will continue to go places under the direction of Chino Trinidad and Dioceldo Sy. It will continue to produce future basketball superstars year in and year out.

Overseas, in the United States' National Basketball League (NBA), the Los Angeles Lakers will remain potent despite early losses. Yao Ming (move over, Shaq) and the Houston Rockets will hog the headlines, but the Dallas Mavericks, New Jersey Nets and Sacramento Kings should find 2003 the perfect year to win the much-coveted trophy.

I expect the injury-free Mavs to move up the ladder and make it to the finals. Sacramento and LA will renew their rivalry, but last year's losing finalist, New Jersey, won't be far behind.

A third Ateneo-La Salle showdown might be derailed by UAAP's re-emerging powers

An inspiration

Manny Pacquiao will continue to inspire young kids with his fists of fury, but he must keep his feet planted firmly on the ground to extend his reign.

The revival of amateur boxing starts with the National Open this summer, while the FedEx Tour should bring smiles to sun-baked cyclists, who till the land when not competing.

Boxing boss Manny Lopez will gain a trusted and intelligent supporter in the person of Palawan's likeable governor Joel Reyes. Armed with enthusiasm and charm, Reyes will be a valuable boxing godfather. Budding internationalists will find Palawan a training heaven.

Django Bustamante will continue to sow fear with his smashing breaks and brilliant shotmaking, but Efren "Bata" Reyes will be right behind him. Both will give the Philippines an impressive performance in the Vietnam Southeast Asian Games (SEAG). The country's star-studded chess team could battle the Vietnamese chessers for the gold in the biennial games.

Athletics, a flop in the Busan Asiad, will rebound mightily in Vietnam with lilliputian Eduardo Buenavista towering over his rivals.

Table tennis should have a wonderful year, while lawn tennis has nowhere to go but up. I doubt, however, if our netters can measure up to Thailand, which has already produced the world-class Paradorn Srichapan.

Philippine Sports Commission chair Eric Buhain will spend the year mapping out plans for the SEA Games. The big problem is where to get the moolah to fuel various projects leading to the SEAG.

The Philippine Olympic Committee's Celso Dayrit is going to spend precious time uniting his turf, while the Basketball Association of the Philippines will be in the forefront of the country's bid to regain its lofty international standing in the sport with a mean national men's basketball team headed by firebrand Aric del Rosario.

Football, which is more suited to the Filipinos' physique, and volleyball, will slowly gain acceptance among Pinoys. Of course, it will help if our footballers will cease to be the region's whipping boys in the sport and become winners. The same goes for the volleybelles, once the darlings of the SEAG.

The highly successful Nestea program, which has revitalized beach volleyball, is alive, but beach football remains moribund.

Matching up to 'killers'

To make an impact in SEAG, we have to recruit taller, powerful and smart players, who can match up to the Indon and Thai "killers."

Badminton is rising steadily while golf, backed up by multinational sponsors, is in safe grounds. Motorsports, despite sponsorship problems, will continue to roar. Taekwondo, karate-do and wushu will bring honors to the country.

Inspired by Mikee Jaworski's Asian Games triumph, equestrian will gain new followers. Unfortunately, only a chosen few will be able to follow in Jaworski's footsteps.

Sales in the bouyant horseracing game will reach record-breaking highs and Hermie Esguerra's Wind Blown, barring a major injury, will continue to rule in this game of Kings.

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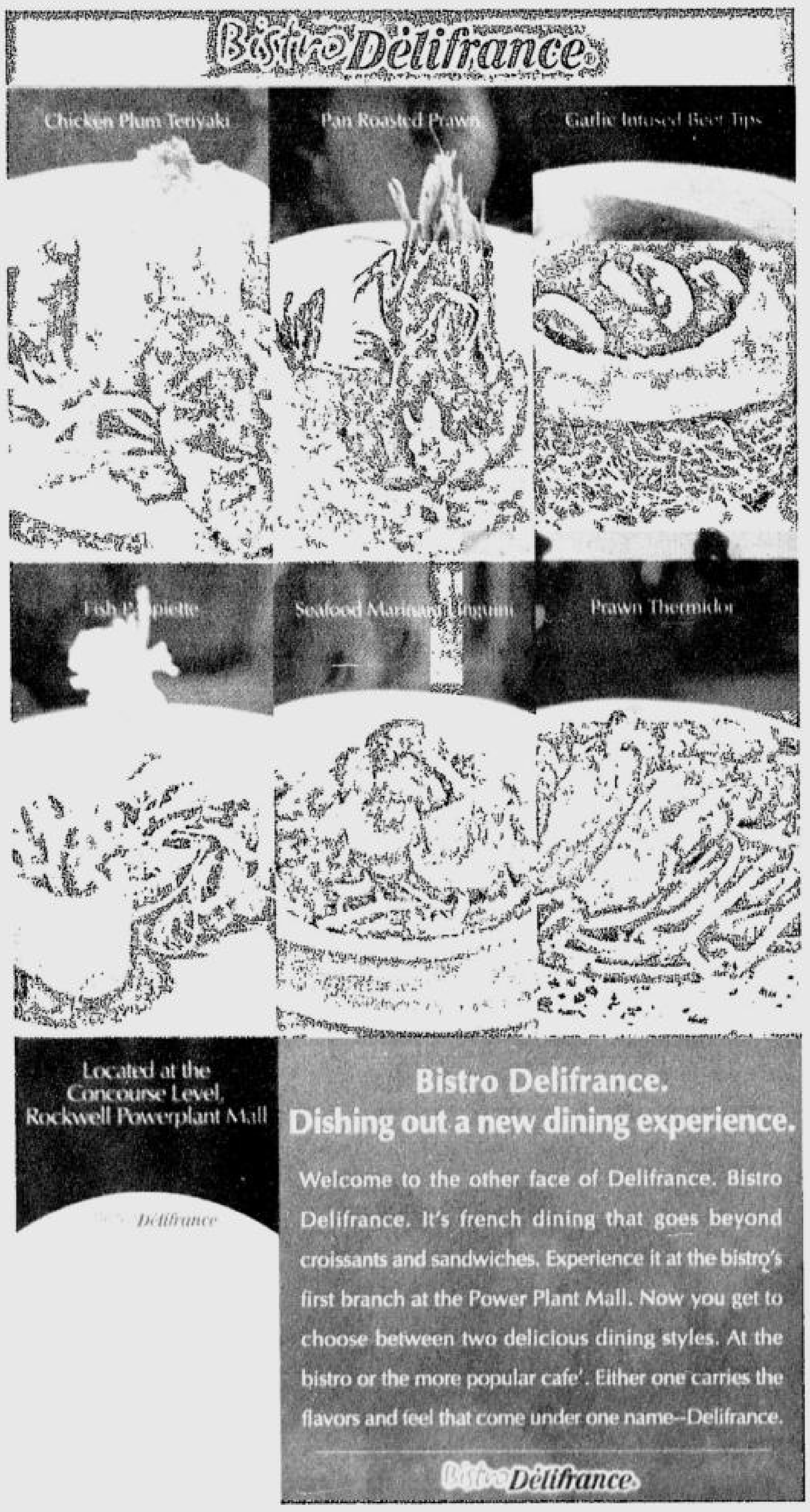

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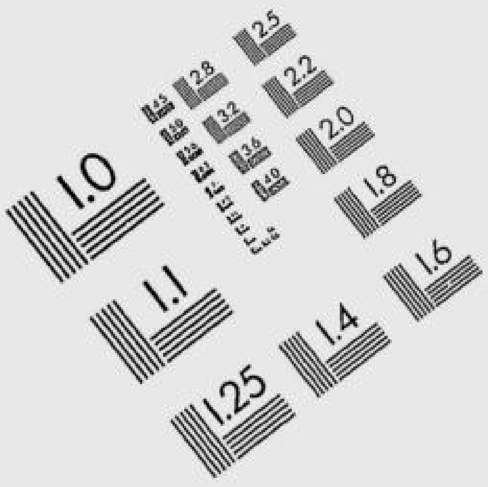

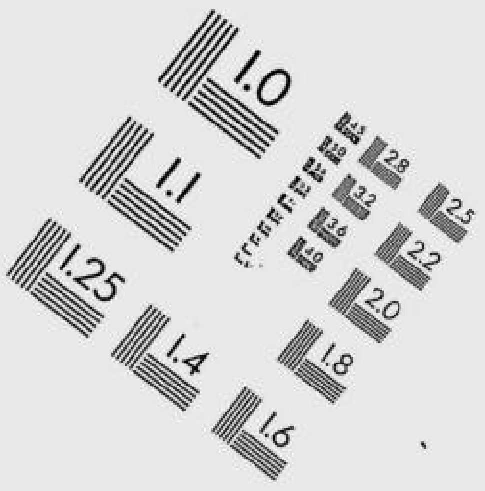

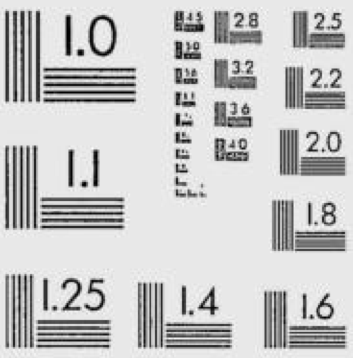
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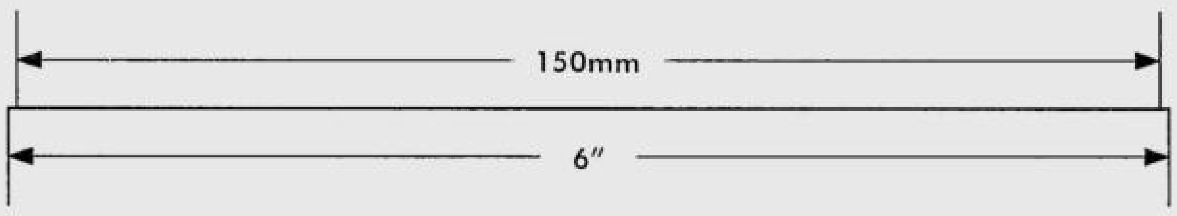

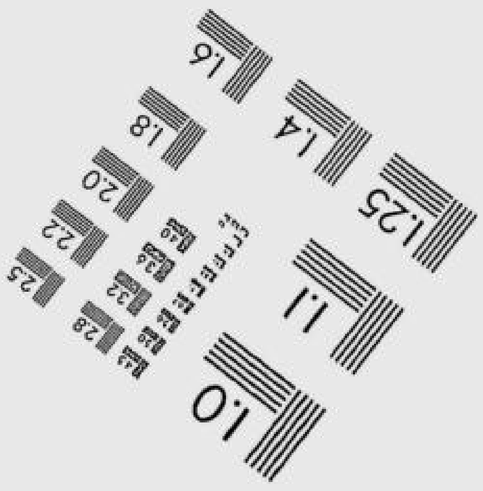

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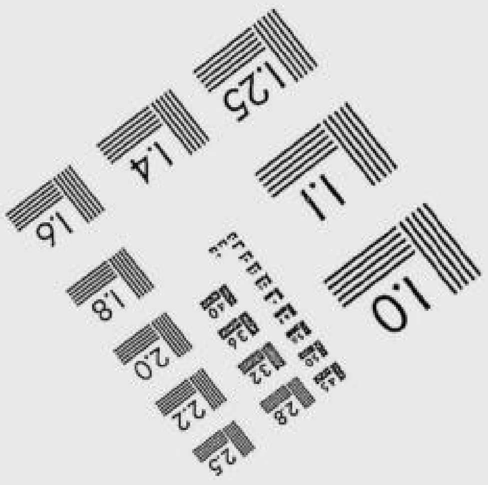

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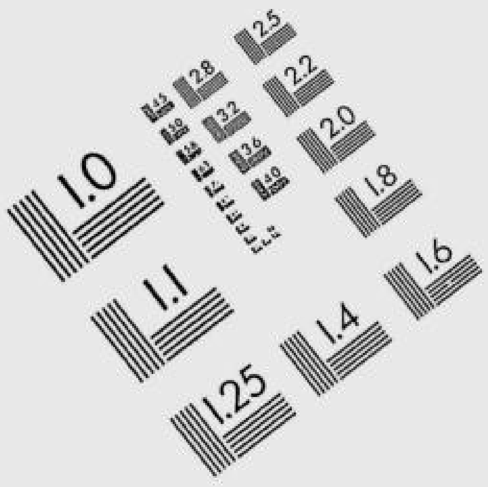
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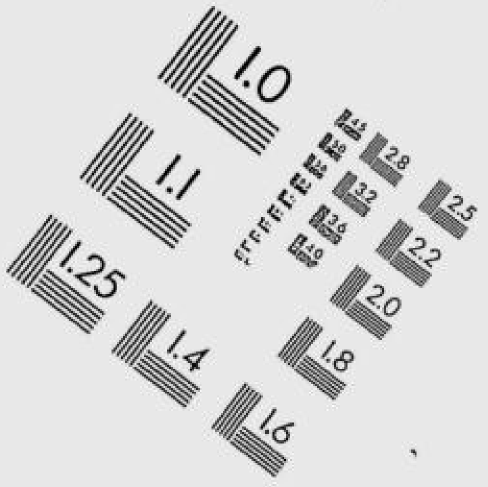
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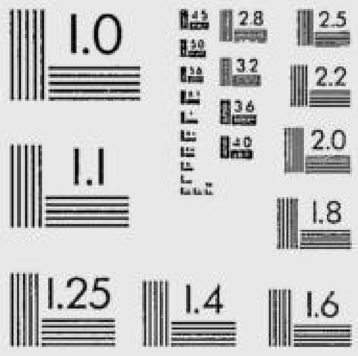
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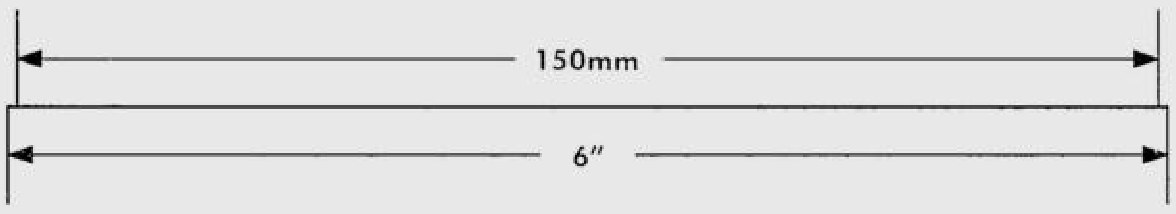

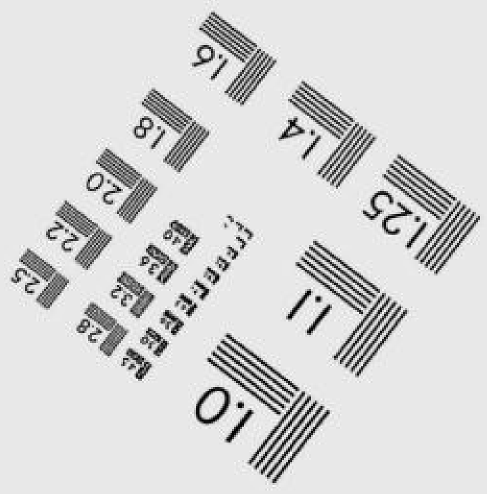
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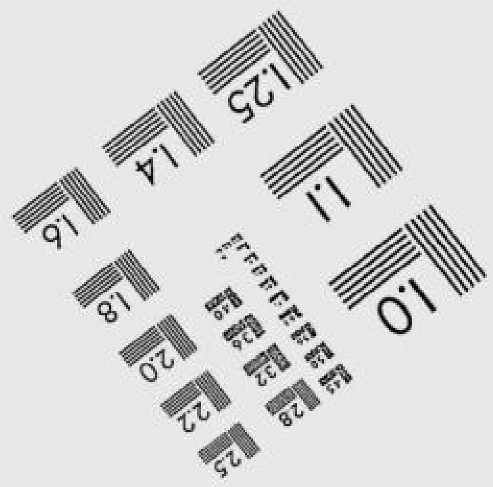
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